



Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India,
in collaboration with Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India





YOGA

for PREGNANT LADIES

Preamble:

Pregnancy is the process whereby the life of a baby begins within the mother's womb and progresses up to the stage when it is safe to expose the baby to the outside world. Pregnancy brings extensive change in a woman's life. Pregnancy is a very precious and important event in a woman's life where the complete care of both mother and child is utmost important. Prenatal care, even before planning pregnancy, helps in safe conception as well as delivery of a healthy infant and prevents the complications of pregnancy. From the moment of conception, the mother's body begins to transform in many ways to accommodate the new life nurturing within her. As the baby grows and develops, mothers need to adjust both physically and emotionally. Pregnancy related discomforts due to anatomical and physiological changes can be stressful to women. They have to understand and recognize that these symptoms in motherhood stage are temporary and that there are ways to cope up them. Failing to understand this basic fact may affect the development of the fetus and henceforth the total health of the child. During the later stages of pregnancy, a mother has to prepare for labor and childbirth. And after the baby arrives, a mother has to begin the transition to life as a parent of the newborn. Mother plays a major role in shaping the family, society and the nation. Health of mothers is important as they have several responsibilities both at social and domestic fronts. She has to perform multiple activities in the kitchen, home, office and thus the health of women is of prime consideration.

Simple steps like regular medical check-up, regular exercise, healthy eating can be helpful for mothers in maintaining good health. Apart from biological intervention, social and psychological support is equally important. At this juncture, Yoga is recognized as one of the effective systems of healthcare to manage the motherhood problems.

Women's health during pregnancy also includes prevention of obesity, which also helps to avoid problems like cardiac diseases, diabetes, cancer, osteoarthritis, sleep disturbances, infectious diseases, malnutrition etc. Females experience more episodes of illness than males and are less likely to receive medical treatment. Nutritional status of women and girls is compromised by unequal access to food, heavy work demand (mental and physical), special nutritional need (such as iron, calcium); thus, females are more susceptible to illness. Especially, the poor women are trapped in vicious cycle of ill-health, exacerbated by child bearing and hard physical labor. Women's health is bound up with social, cultural and economic factor that influence all aspect of their lives and consequences are born by women themselves.

Pregnancy experiences crucial state of changes in a woman's physical, mental and emotional levels as they face different kind of problems at this stage like mental irritation, distress, vomiting, nausea, lower backache and so on.

A sound positive effect upon baby may be seen with the baby if mother undergoes regular Yogic practices.

Objectives of Yoga for Pregnancy

The objectives of Yoga for pregnancy are:

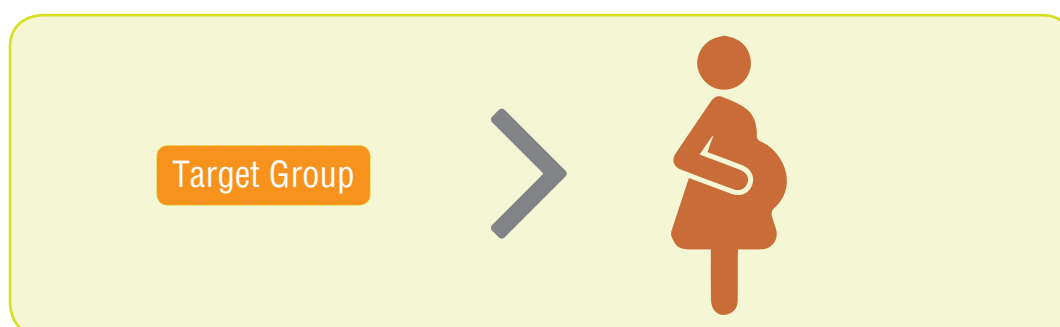
1. To make awareness about certain Yogic practices during pregnancy
2. To overcome the complications occurring in pregnancy
3. To disseminate the knowledge and understanding of Yogic diet and lifestyle in pregnancy.



Need of Yoga during Pregnancy

During pregnancy period body undergo various changes, which create stress on mental as well as physical levels. Yoga practices help to maintain a healthy mind and body in pregnancy. Yogic practices for pregnant women, to increase strength, flexibility and endurance of pelvic floor muscles needed for childbirth. It also helps to develop proper breathing and more comfortable labor. Yogic practices help to:

1. Reduces stress level
2. Improves the quality of sleep
3. Increases the strength, flexibility and endurance of muscles around the pelvic region
4. Decreases lower back pain
5. Decreases nausea
6. Decreases carpal tunnel syndrome
7. Decreases headaches
8. Reduces risk of preterm labor
9. Lower risk of intrauterine growth restriction (condition that slows the baby's growth)



General Guidelines of Yogic Practice:

1. Yogic practice should be practiced in a quiet and calm atmosphere.
2. Practice in empty stomach after emptying bowels and bladder
3. Use Yoga mat, mattress for the Yoga practice.
4. Light and comfortable cotton clothes are preferred.
5. Yogic practices shall be performed slow and relaxed manner.
6. Always breathing should be through the nostrils unless instructed otherwise.
7. Do not jerk the body when practicing Yoga.
8. Yogic practices should be performed according to your own capacity.
9. Yoga session should end with deep silence / meditation/ Sankalpa Śhāntipatha.



Guidelines- Yoga for Pregnant Ladies

The first thing is to remember that every pregnancy is different, even for the same woman. It is always best to listen to the body and do only what feels right each day. Modify according to the practitioners condition, especially when trying new Yoga poses. Concentrate on maintaining good alignment and breathing. Asanas should be practiced with proper guidance or under proper supervision.

1. As a general rule, modify poses to make space for growing belly and find poses that are similar but less demanding to the body.
2. Blood sugar levels can dip more frequently in pregnancy. Although one is advised not to eat before doing Yoga, pregnant women may need to have a light snack or juices before class.
3. More attention should be paid to pelvic floor awareness in all asanas and pranayama practice.
4. Tune the body with the growing baby with slow rhythmic breathing and relaxation poses during the Yoga practice. Do modified versions of Balasana (Child), Marjariasana (Cat), Malasana (Squat) and Butterfly Yoga poses (Bhadrasana).
5. Focus on stability and strength, rather than flexibility and endurance.
6. Avoid asanas compressing the uterus (e.g. forward bendings or closed twists) or asanas overstretching the abdominal muscles (e.g. backbends).
7. Do practice open twists by moving from the head to the waist only. Restorative poses, such as Supported Bridge with pillows and Reclining Butterfly with pillow, generally offer similar but less demanding backbends.
8. Avoid inverted asanas, like shoulder/hand/head stand; compressing the abdomen in twisted standing poses like Parivritta Trikonasana and abdominal poses like Navasana and Naukasana.
9. No lying on your stomach asanas like Bhujangasana, Shalabhasana and Dhanurasana etc.
10. Avoid lying flat on your back if you feel dizzy, sweaty, nauseous or short of breath. Avoid raising the hands above your head if dizzy when standing.
11. Avoid Kapalabhati kriya or any such straining cleansing practices.
12. In pranayama avoid Bhastrika and Kumbhaka (retention of breath). Practice slow breathing techniques, such as the Yogic deep breathing, Anuloma Viloma, Ujjayi and Bhramari to bring focus, reduce stress, anxiety and preparation for child birth.



Recommended Protocol for Pregnant Ladies

Yoga for Pregnant Ladies (First Trimester)

S. NO.	YOGA PRACTICES	ROUNDS	DURATION
1.	PRAYER		1 Minute
2.	YOGIC SUKSHMA VYAYAMA: (Micro Circulation Practices)		8 Minutes
	Neck Movements:		
	- Forward and Backward bending	3 Rounds	
	- Right and Left bending	3 Rounds	
	- Right and Left Twisting	3 Rounds	
	- Neck Rotation (Clockwise & Anti clockwise)	3 Rounds	
	Shoulder Movements		
	- Shoulder Stretch	3 Rounds	
	- Shoulder Rotation (Forward & Backward)	3 Rounds	
	Knee Movement	5 Rounds	
	Ankle Movement		10 Minutes
	- Ankle Rotation (Clockwise & Anti clockwise)	5 Rounds	
3.	YOGASANAS		
	STANDING POSTURES		
	- Tadasana		
	- Vrikshasana		
	SITTING POSTURES		
	- Dandasana		
	- Sukhasana		
	SUPINE POSTURES		
	- Shavasana		
4.	BREATHING PRACTICES	5 rounds each	20 Minutes
	- Sectional Breathing: Abdominal, Thoracic and Clavicular breathing		
5.	PRANAYAMA:		
	- Nadi Sodhana Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	- Bhramari Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	- Sitali pranayama	5 Rounds	5 Minutes
6.	DHYANA		
7.	SHANTI PATHA		1 Minute
	TOTAL TIME	45 Minutes	



Yoga for Pregnant Ladies (Second Trimester)

S. NO.	YOGA PRACTICES	ROUNDS	DURATION
1.	PRAYER		1 Minute
2.	YOGIC SUKSHMA VYAYAMA: (Micro Circulation Practices)		5 Minutes
	Neck Movements:		
	- Forward and Backward bending	3 Rounds	
	- Right and Left bending	3 Rounds	
	- Right and Left Twisting	3 Rounds	
	- Neck Rotation (Clockwise & Anti clockwise)	3 Rounds	
	Shoulder Movements		
	- Shoulder Stretch	3 Rounds	
	- Shoulder Rotation (Forward & Backward)	3 Rounds	
3.	YOGASANAS		18 Minutes
	STANDING POSTURES		
	- Tadasana		
	- Vrikshasana		
	- Trikonasana		
	- Katichakrasana		
	- Veerbhadrasana		
	- Prasaritha padottanasana		
	SITTING POSTURES		
	- Dandasana		
	- Sukhasana		
	- Badhakonasana		
	- Shashankasana		
	- Marjariasana (with breathing)		
	- Malasana		
	- Parivrata Sukhasana		
	SUPINE POSTURES		
	- Viparitakarani with wall support		
	- Shavasana		
	PRONE POSTURES		
	- Balasana		
4.	PRANAYAMA:		10 Minutes
	- Nadi Sodhana Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	- Ujjayi Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	- Sitali pranayama	5 Rounds	
5.	DHYANA		10 Minutes
6.	SHANTI PATHA		1 Minute
	TOTAL TIME		45 Minutes

Yoga for Pregnant Ladies (Third Trimester)

S. NO.	YOGA PRACTICES	ROUNDS	DURATION
1.	PRAYER		1 Minute
2.	YOGIC SUKSHMA VYAYAMA: (Micro Circulation Practices)		5 Minutes
	Neck Movements:		
	- Forward and Backward bending	3 Rounds	
	- Right and Left bending	3 Rounds	
	- Right and Left Twisting	3 Rounds	
	- Neck Rotation (Clockwise & Anti clockwise)	3 Rounds	
	Shoulder Movements		
	- Shoulder Stretch	3 Rounds	
	- Shoulder Rotation (Forward & Backward)	3 Rounds	
	Ankle Movement		
	- Ankle Rotation (Clockwise & Anti clockwise)	5 Rounds	
3.	YOGASANAS		15 Minutes
	STANDING POSTURES		
	- Tadasana		
	- Trikonasana		
	- Ardha Parhsvakonasana		
	SITTING POSTURES		
	- Dandasana		
	- Sukhasana		
	- Upavistha Konasana		
	- Parivratjanushirshasana		
	- Marjariasana		
	SUPINE POSTURES		
	- Supta Badhakonasana		
	- Shavasana		
4.	PRANAYAMA		8 Minutes
	- Nadi Sodhana Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	- Bhramari Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	- Sitali pranayama	5 Rounds	
5.	DHYANA Om meditation or So – ham Meditation		15 Minutes
6.	SHANTI PATHA		1 Minute
	TOTAL TIME	45 Minutes	



Yogic diet:

Pregnancy is a happy and joyous time of life in women. This is a challenging and crucial time of women's life as the mother's body goes through numerous physiological changes in order to create and support the development of a new life. During the pregnancy period, the need of macro and micro nutrients increase and healthy diet during pregnancy helps to protect the mother from health risks. Healthy eating during pregnancy may also protect your baby against diseases in later life.

The diet 'Ahara' part has to be executed along with the standard Yogic practice. Consumption of refined food induces tamasic gunas leads to diseases. Hence 'Sattvic ahara' which includes millets, whole grains should be encouraged, especially in pregnancy women whose needs for calcium, iron are more compared to the other individuals. Yogic Diet works to prevent disease, increase energy and improve overall health. It relies on food as close to its natural state as possible. This means eating foods that do not consist of artificial ingredients and are free of chemical preservatives and additives. The primary food intake should be ideally organic wholesome foods that are as fresh as much as possible to ensure maximum nutritional value and life force.

The diet rich in leafy vegetables, coconut milk, different millet varieties should be added to achieve optimum benefits. Pregnant women should take a balanced diet consisting of sprouts, brown rice (softly cooked) vegetable soups, porridge, multigrain, milk with honey, overnight soaked dry fruits. Also include green leafy vegetables, Seasonal vegetables and fruits in moderate quantity.

During pregnancy, baby is dependent upon mother for nutrition, so special care has to be taken. A well-balanced diet of a continuous vigilance on weight of mother is to be provided. It is important that women should gain weight during pregnancy (9-13kg.). Failing to gain appropriate weight makes for a low-weight baby. On the contrary too much weight may make delivery bit difficult.



Following are the food items prescribed for pregnant women

1. Vegetables: All green leafy vegetables, Ridge gourd, Apple gourd, Beet root, Turnip, Carrot, Cucumber, Spinach, Tomato etc.
2. Cereals: Unpolished rice, Whole wheat and multi-grain flour.

3. Sweet: Honey.
4. Sprouts: Wheat, Green gram, Bengal gram, Groundnut, Fenugreek.
5. Dry fruits: Dates, Dry grapes, Cashew, Almonds, Walnut, Dry grapes (soaked overnight).
6. Fresh fruits: Ripened, Seasonal and juicy fruits like Guava, Pear, Apple, Banana, Orange, Sweet orange.
7. Fruit juice: Apple juice, Carrot juice and Orange juice.
8. Soups: Spinach, Carrot, Tomato, Beetroot and Coriander either all mixed or can be prepared separately.
9. Others: Lemon water, Butter milk, Tender coconut water etc.

Avoid excess Tea, Coffee, Sugar/candy, refined white flour products, Garam masala, and deep fried and oily items.



Note:

1. Expectant mother should eat small portion of food at regular interval.
2. Avoid heavy, spicy food as they cause flatulence. Keep the salt intake low.
3. Consume more of fruits and vegetables daily.
4. Add honey to milk, limit intake of sugar.

Other important advice to be followed during pregnancy:

1. Pregnant women should have very nutritious, balanced and Sattvic diet. The following points should be kept in mind:
 - ☐ Essential nutritional supplement for women.
 - ☐ Essential nutrition for foetal development.
 - ☐ Essential nutrition for uterus, breast and amniotic fluid development.
 - ☐ Essential nutritive food during and after pregnancy for good lactation.
2. Malnutrition during pregnancy may lead to Anemia, Rickets and bow knee to the child.
3. Pregnant women should protect themselves from excessive stress.
4. Take leisure walk for half an hour every day after having dinner.

Conclusion:

Yogic practices and diet are most important during pregnancy as well as throughout labour and on birth outcomes. It improves neuro-muscular coordination, sleep, quality of life, reduces stress, anxiety and increases the strength, flexibility and endurance of muscles needed for childbirth.



Yogic Practices for Healthy Pregnancy

1. PRAYER

Yogic Practice shall start with a prayer or prayerful mood to enhance the benefits of practice.

**OM SAHANA VAVATU SAHANA BHUNATTU
SAHA VIRYAM KARAWAVAHAI
TEJASVINAVADITAMASTU
MA VIDVISHAVAHAI
OM SHANTI SHANTI OM**

*Together may we be protected
Together may we be nourished
Together may we work with great energy
May our journey together be brilliant and effective
May there be no bad feelings between us
Peace, peace, peace*



2. YOGIC SUKSHMA VYAYAMA: (Micro Circulation Practices)

Yogic Sūksma Vyāyāmas help to increase micro circulation. These practices can be done while standing and sitting.

I. NECK BENDING

Sthiti: Samasthiti (Alert Posture)

Technique

STAGE I: (Forward and Backward Bending)



1. Stand with the feet comfortably apart.
2. Keep your arms on the waist.
3. While exhaling, move the head forward slowly and try to touch the chin to the chest.
4. While inhaling, move the head as far back as is comfortable.
5. This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.

STAGE - II : (Right and Left bending)



1. While exhaling, bend the head slowly to the right; bring the ear as close as possible to the shoulder without raising the shoulder.
2. While inhaling, bring the head to the normal position.
3. Similarly, while exhaling bend the head to the left side.
4. Inhale and bring the head up to normal position.
5. This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.

STAGE - III : (Right and Left Twisting)



1. Keep the head upright.
2. While exhaling, gently turn the head to the right so that the chin is in line with the shoulder.
3. While inhaling, bring the head to the normal position.
4. Similarly, while exhaling, turn the head to the left.
5. Inhale and bring the head to the normal position.
6. This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.

STAGE IV: Neck Rotation



1. Exhale; bend the head forward trying to touch the chin to the chest.
2. Inhale; slowly rotate the head clockwise in a circular motion, exhale while coming down.
3. Do a full rotation.
4. Then rotate the head in an anti-clockwise direction.
5. Inhale; go back and exhale, come down.
6. This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.



Note:

1. Move the head as far as possible.
2. Do not over strain. Keep the shoulders relaxed and steady.
3. Feel the stretch around the neck and loosening up of the joints and muscles of the neck.
4. Can be practiced sitting on a chair.
5. People with neck pain can do the practice gently especially when taking the head back to the extent it is comfortable.

II. SHOULDER'S MOVEMENT

Sthiti: Samasthiti (Alert Posture)

Technique:

STAGE I: Shoulder's Stretch



1. Feet together the body straight, the arms by the sides.
2. Raise your both arms sideways above your head with the palm outward.
3. Bring it down in the same manner.
4. The arms must not touch the head when going up or the thighs when coming down.
5. Palms must be opened, with fingers together.

STAGE II: Shoulder Rotation



1. Stand erect. Place the fingers of left hand on the left shoulder and the fingers of right hand on the right shoulder.
2. Full rotation of the both elbows in a circular manner.
3. Try to touch the elbows in front of the chest on the forward movement and touch the ears while moving up.
4. Stretch the arm back in the backward movement and touch the side of the trunk while coming down.
5. It is the clockwise rotation and repeats it for 5 times.
6. Do the same with anti-clockwise.



Benefits:

1. Practice of this Yogic kriyā makes the bones, muscles and nerves of the shoulder region healthy.
2. These practices are helpful in cervical spondylitis and frozen shoulder.

III. KNEE MOVEMENT

Sthiti: Sama Sthiti (Alert Posture)

Technique

1. Inhale; lift your arms up at the shoulder level, palms facing downwards.



2. Exhale; bend the knees and bring down your body to the half squatting position.
3. In the final position, both the arms and thighs should be parallel to the ground.
4. Inhale; and straighten the body. Exhale while bringing down the hands.
5. Repeat two more times.



Note:

1. Strengthen knees' and hips' joint.
2. Avoid this asana in case of acute conditions of arthritis.



IV. ANKLE ROTATION

Sthiti: SamaSthiti (Alert Posture)



Technique

1. With the feet together, sit erect.
2. Stretching forward and circle first from right to left, then from left to right, with the ankle.
3. Repeat with the other foot.
4. Repeat two more times.



Note:

1. The exercise relieves rheumatism of the ankles and strengthens the toes and the feet
2. Avoid this asana in case of acute conditions of arthritis.



3. YOGĀSANAS

A. STANDING POSTURES

TĀDĀSANA (Palm Tree Posture)

Tāda means palm tree or mountain. This asana teaches one to attain stability and firmness and forms the base for all the standing asana.

Technique

1. Stand with feet 2 inches apart.
2. Interlock the fingers, and turn the wrist outwards.
3. Now inhale, raise the arms up. Bring them in line with the shoulders.
4. Raise the heels off the floor and balance on the toes. Stay in this position for 10-15 seconds. Exhale, bring the heels down.
5. Release the interlock of the fingers and bring the arms down parallel to the trunk, and come back to standing posture.



Benefits

1. Tadasana stretches and strengthens the legs.
2. It helps to reduce swelling in the feet of pregnant women.
3. It helps to open up the hips and chest region.
4. It enhances blood circulation in abdominal region.

A word of caution

1. Avoid lifting the toes in case of acute cardiac problems varicose veins and vertigo

VRKSĀSANA (The Tree Posture)

Vrksa means tree. The final position of this āsana resembles the shape of a tree, hence the name.

Technique

1. Stand with feet 2 inches apart. Focus on a point in front.
2. Exhale, bend the right leg and place the foot on the inside of the left thigh.
3. The heel should be touching the perineum.
4. Inhale and extend the arms up and join the palms.
5. Stay in the position for 10 to 30 seconds and breathe normally.
6. Exhale and bring the arms and right foot down.
7. Relax and repeat the asana by bending the left leg.



Benefits

1. Improves neuro-muscular coordination, balance, endurance and alertness
2. It helps to mind focus and relax.
3. It strengthens the thighs and pelvic floor muscles.

A word of caution

1. Please avoid this practice in case of arthritis, vertigo and obesity.

TRIKONĀSANA (The Triangle Posture)

Trikona means triangle. Tri means three and kona is an angle. As the āsana resembles three arms triangles made by the trunk and the limbs, it has been named Trikonāsana.

Technique

1. Stand on your feet comfortably apart.
2. Slowly raise both the arms sideways till they are horizontal.
3. Exhale, slowly bend to the right side and place the right hand just behind the right foot.
4. The left arm is straight up, in line with the right arm.
5. Turn the left palm forward. Turn your head and gaze at the tip of the left middle finger.
6. Remain in the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing. As you inhale slowly come up.
7. Repeat for the left side.



Benefits

1. Trikonasana helps to reduce back pain by stretch and strengthen the spinal muscles, improves lung function and make ease child birth

A word of caution

1. Avoid this posture in case of slipped disc, sciatica, and after undergoing abdominal surgery.

KATICKAKRASANA (Lumbar-Twist Posture)

'Kati' means waist and 'cakra' means wheel. In this asana, one has to twist the waist to right and left side. While doing so, the waist moves like a wheel, therefore it is named as Katicakrasana.

Sthiti: Samasthiti (Alert Posture)

Technique

1. Keep the legs about 2-3 feet apart.
2. Rise both the arms up to chest level with palms facing each other and keep them parallel.
3. While exhaling, twist the body towards the left side so that the right palm touches the left shoulder, come back with inhalation.
4. While exhaling, twist the body towards the right side so that the left palm touches the right shoulder, come back with inhalation.
5. This is one round: repeat two more times.
6. Relax in Samasthiti.



Benefits :

1. Katichakrasana is good to tone up the waist, back, hips muscles and prevents the spinal deformity.
2. It helps to ease child birth.



Virabhadrasana (The Warrior Pose):

The Virabhadrasana is derived from the Sanskrit vira, meaning "hero," bhadra, meaning "auspicious," and asana, meaning "pose" and this asana is commonly called "warrior pose."

Technique

1. Stand erect and spread legs about 3 to 4 feet distance.
2. Right foot should be in the front and the left foot behind.
3. Now, turn right foot outwards by 90 degrees and the left by 15 degrees and both legs are in same line.
4. Slowly raise the both arms sideward and join your palms above your head.
5. Now exhale and bend right knee. Knee does not go ahead of your ankle.
6. Gently push your pelvis down. Hold the pose for few seconds with normal breath.
7. Inhale and come up.



Benefits :

1. This asana helps to opens up chest and strengthened the legs.
2. It also strengthens the spine and prepares it to carry the weight of the growing uterus.
3. It helps to relax the mind and improve balance.

Prasarita Padottanasana (Wide-Legged Forward Bend Yoga Pose):

Prasarita means spread, stretched out or outstretched limbs, Pada means "foot" and Uttana means intense or stretched out.

Technique

1. Start in the Tadasana pose. Take a deep breath and spread the feet 3 to 4 feet apart.
2. Take in a deep breath, and lift the chest. Exhale and keep lengthening the front of torso.
3. Bend forward slowly, allowing the chest and shoulders parallel to the ground.
4. Reach out hands and place on ground. Bend elbows and lean in further, bending torso from the hips.
5. Try and rest the crown of head on the floor in front and maintain for few seconds.
6. Take in a deep breath and come back into the standing Pose.



Benefits

1. This asana helps to strengthen the spine, improves the blood flow to the fetus, normalize the endocrine profile and help to control the body weight.

Ardha Parhsvakonasana

Parsva' means side and 'Kona' means angle. In the final pose, the body forms a lateral angle; hence, it is called Parsvakonasana.

Technique

1. Stand erect. Inhale and spread feet approximately one meter apart.
2. Raise the arms sideways at the shoulder level. Turn right foot to the right at 90 degree and left foot at 60 degree to the right side.
3. Bend right knee forming a right angle with the thigh and the calf with right thigh parallel to the floor.
4. Exhale and bend right side and bring right arm down so that right armpit touches right knee and right side of upper trunk touches right thigh.
5. Place right palm on the floor at the inner side of the right foot.
6. In the final posture, spine must be kept straight and the left foot flat on the floor.
7. Hold the posture for 30 seconds breathing normally.
8. Inhale and lift right palm from the floor; raise the trunk; straighten right leg, and raise the arms; come back to the starting position.
9. Repeat if on the other side with the same procedure.



Benefits

1. This asana stretches and strengthens the legs and reduce swelling in the feet of pregnant women.
2. It improves blood circulation, stimulates abdominal organs, relieves constipation, which is a major problem in the first trimester of pregnancy.

B. SITTING POSTURES

Dandasana:

The word "Danda" comes from the Sanskrit word which means stick or rod and the meaning of Asana is Posture.

Technique

1. Sit on the floor with the legs stretched in front.
2. Place the palms on the floor by the side of hips, the fingers pointing to the front. Stretch the hands straight and keep the back straight.
3. Stay for this pose few seconds.



Benefits

1. This asana strengthens the spinal muscles of pregnant women and prevents back pain.

Sukhasana

Technique

1. Sit on the floor with legs stretched in front.
2. Sit erect with spine straight.
3. Fold the right leg and tug in inside the left thigh.
4. Then fold the left leg and tug it inside the right thigh.
5. Place the hands on the knee joints.
6. Relax whole body and breathe normally.



Benefits

1. This asana helps to pregnant women for meditation, which facilitates to overcome stress and anxiety during pregnancy.
2. To build a strong connection with your baby.

Badhakonasana:

Badhakonasana comes from the Sanskrit baddha, meaning "bound," kona, meaning "angle" and asana, meaning "pose" or "posture."

Technique

1. Sit straight on the floor with spine erect.
2. Bend knees by and try to touch the soles of feet each other.
3. Hold feet tightly with hands. Inhale deeply.
4. While exhaling press the thighs and knees down towards the floor by pressing elbows on thighs and breathe normally.
5. Finally slowly come up and release the pose.



Benefits

1. This asana improves flexibility in groin and hip region, makes easy and smooth delivery for pregnant women.
2. Stimulate and improve the function of the reproductive system in women.

SASANKASANA (Hare Posture)

Sasanka means 'hare'. The body in this posture takes the shape of a hare, hence the name.

Technique

1. Sit in Vajrasana with spine erect.
2. Spread both the knees wide apart while toes remaining together.
3. While inhale, raise both arms above the head and in exhaling, bend forward with the arms straight.
4. Chin and arms should be resting on the floor.
5. Look in front and maintain the position for as long as comfortable.
6. Slowly come back in the initial position.



Benefits

1. Sasankasana massages the internal organs, improves blood circulation thereby stimulating them.
2. It helps battle fatigue, dizziness and nausea which are the common problems in pregnancy.

Marjariasana

'Marjari' means 'Cat' and 'asana' means 'pose' so it is called Marjariasana (cat pose).

Technique

1. Sit in Vajrasana, stand on the knees.
2. Lean forward and place the hands flat on the floor with palms down and fingers facing towards the forward direction.
3. Keep the arms and thighs perpendicular to the floor.
4. Inhale raise the head up and spine concave shape.
5. While exhale, lower the head and make spine convex by contract abdomen and pull the buttocks.
6. Relax and practice again.



Benefits :

1. This asana strengthens the core muscles gently in pregnant women.
2. In post pregnancy helps to tone up reproductive organs.

Malasana:

Malasana also known as the Squat or Garland Pose.

Technique

1. Start in Tadasana, with feet slightly wider than hip distance apart.
2. Pivot feet so toes are wider than heels.
3. Bend knees deeply, sinking down until hips are lower than knees, a few inches off the floor.
4. Bring palms together at heart center, and wedge elbows one at a time, to the inside of knees.
5. Draw heart forward and up, attempting to bring length into lower back and spine.
6. Stay for 30 seconds.
7. To get out of the pose, either sit back onto buttocks, or push back up to standing.



Benefits

1. This asana helps to open up the hips joints, strengthen pelvic muscles and make ease labour.

Parivrata Sukhasana

Parivrtta Sukhasana is derived from the Sanskrit words Parivrtta (revolve), Sukha (easy or comfortable or joy), and asana (posture or pose). It is called as Simple Cross-Legged Twist.

Technique

1. Start with sitting in the sukhasana with spine straight.
2. Slowly place the right hand behind and left hand should be on the right knee.
3. Bend towards right and try to see behind with spine straight.
4. Hold in this position for a few seconds with normal breath.
5. Repeat the steps on opposite side.



Benefits

1. This asana tone ups the spinal nerves, ease back pain, enhance the womb space for easy and healthy growth of the baby in pregnant women.

Upavistha konasana (Seated Wide Angle Pose)

In Sanskrit, 'Upavistha' means 'seated or sitting', 'kona' means 'angle' and 'asana' means 'posture or pose'.

Technique

1. Sit straight with the legs stretched forward.
2. Separate the legs into a V shape.
3. Inhale, raise the arms above the head and elongate the spine.
4. Keep the spine straight and bend forward at the hips level with exhale and place the hands in front, palms pressing down on the floor.
5. Keep the back straight, the breast bone parallel to the floor, hold the outsides of the feet with each hand.
6. Hold the pose for few seconds.
Repeat 2 to 3 times.



Benefits

1. This asana improves circulation in the entire pelvic and abdominal areas and improve overall flexibility leads to ease child birth.

Parivrtta Janu Shirshasana (Revolved Head to Knee Pose)

Parivrtta Janu Sirsasana is a Sanskrit word; in which Parivrtta means Revolved, Janu stands for Knee and Shirsa represents the head.

Technique

1. Begin seated in Baddha Konasana.
2. Extend right leg out to the side and pull left heel closer to groin.
3. Place your hands on either side of hips and press down, lengthening the spine up as firm both thighbones down.
4. Inhale, lift and turn torso to the left; exhale and side bend to the right, placing the back of right hand to the floor inside right leg, palm facing up.
5. Next, inhale and extend left arm out, palm facing up; exhale and lean back as reach the arm over ear toward the right foot and hold onto the arch of right foot with right hand.
6. Inhale, reach top arm up and over, clasping the outside of the right foot with left hand.
7. Exhale and pull top arm and shoulder blade back as revolve torso toward the ceiling and gaze up.
8. Hold for few seconds with normal breath and come back with inhale.



Benefits

1. This asana improves circulation in the abdomen and pelvic regions and improve overall flexibility leads to ease child birth.

C. SUPINE POSTURES

Viparitakarani (Legs Up the Wall Pose)

In Sanskrit the term, 'Viparita' means inverted and 'Karani' refers to action. In this posture the body will remain in an inverted position.

Technique

1. Lie on back, making sure that the back of legs press against the wall, and that the soles of feet face upwards.
2. Place buttocks a little away from the wall or press them against the wall.
3. Back and head are resting on the floor and body forms a 90-degree angle.
4. Use hands to support hips and form that curve in lower body.
5. Keep head and neck in a neutral position and soften throat and face.
6. Close eyes and breathe.
7. Hold the position for few seconds with normal breath.
8. Slowly release this pose and come back to lie down.



Benefits

1. This asana relieves swelling in legs, back pain and make relax the body and mind.

Supta Badhakonasana (Reclining Bound Angle Pose)

The name is derived from the Sanskrit *supta*, meaning "reclining," *baddha*, meaning "bound," *kona*, meaning "angle," and *asana*, meaning "pose".

Technique

1. Lie down on the ground.
2. Then, gently bend both knees and bring feet together.
3. Place your heels close to groin.
4. Place palms side of hip and pressed downwards.
5. Exhale, contract abdominal muscles, tailbone moves close to pubic bone.
6. Feel the elongation in lower back and the stability in spine as pelvis tilts.
7. Hold this position few seconds.
8. Now slowly release this pose, come to savasana.



Benefits

1. Promotes deep relaxation and rejuvenated the body.
2. It stretches groins, inner thighs and makes flexibility in birth canal.

Balasana:

Bala means child. The final position in this āsana resembles side lying child.

Sthiti: Side Lying Relaxation Posture

1. Lie on your side during the second and third trimesters of pregnancy.
2. In this time period the weight of the growing uterus can press on a major vein (the vena cava) and limit the flow of blood and oxygen to uterus.
3. Having a couple of bolsters to snuggle with can be a great way to get comfy for this way to modify savasana for pregnancy.
4. Line up two bolsters on the right side of your Yoga mat.

Technique

1. Lie down on the ground.
2. Then, gently bend both knees and bring feet together.
3. Place your heels close to groin.
4. Place palms side of hip and pressed downwards.
5. Exhale, contract abdominal muscles, tailbone moves close to pubic bone.
6. Feel the elongation in lower back and the stability in spine as pelvis tilts.
7. Hold this position few seconds.
8. Now slowly release this pose, come to savasana.



ŚAVĀSANA (The Dead Body Posture)

Sava means dead body. The final position in this āsana resembles a dead body.

Sthiti: Supine Relaxation Posture

Technique

1. Lie down on your back with arms and legs comfortably apart.
2. Palms facing upward; eyes closed.
3. Relax the whole body consciously.
4. Become aware of natural breath and allow it to become rhythmic and slow.
5. Remain in the position till you feel refresh and relax.



Benefits

1. Helps to relieve all kinds of tensions and gives rest to both body and mind.
2. Relaxes the whole psycho-physiological system.
3. The mind, which is constantly attracted to the outer world, takes a U-turn and moves inwards, thus gradually getting absorbed; as the mind turns quiet and absorbed, the practitioner remains undisturbed by the external environment.
4. It is found very beneficial in the management of stress and its consequences.

BREATHING PRACTICES

Sectional Breathing:

Clavicular breathing:

- Sit in comfortable pose and perform thoracic breathing for a few minutes.
- Inhale fully, and expand the rib cage.
- When the ribs are fully expanded, inhale a little more until expansion is felt in the upper portion of the lungs around the base of the neck.
- The shoulders and collar bone should also move up slightly. This will take some effort.
- Exhale slowly, first releasing the lower neck and upper chest, then relax the rest of the rib cage back to its starting position.
- Continue for a few more breaths, observing the effect of this type of breathing.

Thoracic breathing

- Sit in comfortable pose and maintain unbroken awareness of the natural breath for some time, concentrating on the sides of the chest.
- Discontinue any further use of the diaphragm and begin to inhale by slowly expanding the rib cage.
- Feel the movement of the individual ribs outward and upward, and be aware of this expansion drawing air into the lungs. Expand the chest as much as possible.
- Exhale by relaxing the chest muscles.
- Feel the rib cage contracting and forcing the air out of the lungs.
- Breathe slowly and deeply through the chest with total awareness.
- Do not use the diaphragm.
- Continue thoracic breathing for a few minutes, pausing slightly after each inhalation and exhalation.

Abdominal (or diaphragmatic) breathing

- Sit in comfortable pose and observe the spontaneous breath without controlling it in any way. Let it be absolutely natural.
- Continue observing the natural breath for some time.
- Place the hands on the abdomen just above the navel.
- The hands will move up with inhalation and down with exhalation.
- There should be no tension in the abdomen. Do not try to force the movement in any way.
- Try not to expand the chest or move the shoulders.
- Feel the abdomen expanding and contracting. Continue breathing slowly and deeply.

NADĪŚODHANA or ANULOMA VILOMA PRĀNĀYĀMA (Alternate Nostril Breathing)

The main characteristic feature of this prānāyāma is alternate breathing through the left and right nostrils without or with retention of breath (kumbhaka).

Sthiti: Any meditative posture.

Technique

1. Sit in any meditative posture.
2. Keep the spine and head straight with eyes closed.
3. Relax the body with few deep breaths.
4. Keep the left palm on the left knee in Jnāna mudra and the right hand should be in Nāsāgra mudra.
5. Place the ring and small fingers on the left nostril and fold the middle and index finger.
6. Place the right thumb on the right nostril.
7. Breathe in from the left nostril; close the left nostril with the small and ring fingers and release the thumb from the right nostril; exhale through the right nostril.
8. Next, inhale through the right nostril.
9. At the end of inhalation, close the right nostril, open the left nostril and exhale through it.
10. This complete process is one round of the Nādiśodhana or Anuloma Viloma Prānāyāma
11. Repeat 5 rounds.



Ratio and timing

1. For beginners, the duration of inhalation and exhalation should be equal.
2. Gradually make 1:2; inhalation: exhalation

Breathing

1. Breath should be slow, steady and controlled. It should not be forced or restricted in anyway.



Benefits

2. The main purpose of this prāṇāyāmais to purify the principle channels of carrying energy called nadi's; hence nourishes the whole body.
3. Induces tranquillity and helps to improve concentration.
4. Increases vitality and lowers the level of stress and anxiety.
5. It elevates cough disorders.

BHRĀMARĪ PRĀNĀYĀMA (BHRĀMARĪ RECAKA)

Bhrāmarī is derived from bhrāmara which means black bee. During the practice of this prānāyāma, the sound produced resembles the buzzing of a black bee.

Sthiti: Any meditative posture.

Techniques:

Type- I

1. Sit in any meditative posture with eyes closed.
2. Inhale deeply through the nose.
3. Exhale slowly in a controlled manner while making a deep, steady humming sound such as that of black bee. This is one round of Bhrāmarī.
4. Repeat 2 more rounds.

Type-II

1. Sit in any meditative posture with eyes closed.
2. Inhale deeply through the nose.
3. Close the eyes with index fingers, mouth with ring and small fingers and ears from respective thumbs
4. as shown in the figure. This is also called Śanmukhi Mudrā.
5. Exhale slowly in a controlled manner while making a deep, steady humming sound such as that of black bee. This is one round of Bhrāmarī.
6. Repeat 2more rounds.



Benefits

1. The practice of Bhrāmarī relives stress and helps in alleviating anxiety, anger and hyperactivity.
2. The resonance effect of humming sound creates a soothing effect on the mind and nervous system It is a great tranquiliser found good in the management of stress related disorders.
3. It is a useful preparatory prānāyāma for concentration and meditation.

A word of caution

- Please avoid this practice in case of nose and ear infections.

ŚĪTALĪ PRĀNĀYĀMA

Śitalī means cooling. It also means calm and passionless. As the name indicates this prānāyāma cools the mind-body system. It is specially designed to reduce the body temperature. Practice of this prānāyāma brings harmony in the physical body and calms the mind.

Technique

1. Sit in Padmāsana or any other comfortable sitting posture.
2. Place the hand on the knees in Jñānamudrā or anjalimudrā.
3. Roll the tongue from the sides to shape as a tube
4. Inhale through this tube shaped tongue, fill the lungs with air to their maximum capacity and close the mouth.
5. Then slowly exhale through the nostrils.



Benefits

1. Śitalī prānāyāma purifies blood
2. It has cooling effect on body
3. It is beneficial for persons suffering from high blood pressure.
4. It satisfies thirst and appeases hunger
5. It relieves indigestion and disorders caused by phlegm (cough) and bile (pitta)
6. It destroys the disorders of gulma (chronic dyspepsia) and spleen or other related diseases (H.P 2/58).
7. It is beneficial for skin and eyes.

A word of caution

- Those who are suffering from cold, cough or tonsillitis should not do this Pranayama.

DHYĀNA

Dhyāna or meditation is an act of continuous contemplation.

Sthiti: Any meditative posture.

Technique

1. Sit in any meditative posture.
2. Keep your spine comfortably erect.
3. Hold Jnāna mudra as follows:
4. Touch the tip of the thumb to the tip of the index finger, forming a circle.
5. The other three fingers are straight and relaxed.
6. All three fingers are side-by-side and touching.
7. Keep your palms facing upwards upon the thighs.
8. Arms and shoulders should be loose and relaxed.
9. Close your eyes and sit with a slightly upturned face.
10. You need not concentrate. Just maintain a mild focus between the eyebrows and be conscious of your breath.
11. Dissolve your thoughts and attain single and pure thought.
12. Meditate.



Note:

1. For beginners, soothing music may be played in the background during meditation.
2. Stay as long as you can.



Benefits

1. Meditation is the most important component of Yoga practice.
2. It helps the practitioner to eliminate negative emotions like fear, anger, depression, anxiety and to develop positive emotions.
3. Keeps the mind calm and quiet.
4. Increases concentration, memory, clarity of thought and willpower.
5. Rejuvenates the whole body and mind giving them proper rest.
6. Meditation leads to self-realisation.

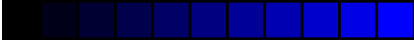
SHANTI PATHA

*Om, Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah,
Sarve Santu Nirāmayāh
Sarve Bhadrāni Paśyantu,
Mā kascit Duhkha Bhāgabhavet
Om, Sāntih Sāntih Sāntih*

May All become Happy, May All be Free from Illness. Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

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