

## YOGA

The word yoga is taken from the Sanskrit word yuj. It means to unite or bind. It is called the combination of body and mind. Yoga is the assimilation of qualities, powers or energies of man.

Yoga is a method through which man's latent powers are developed.

Yoga is the assimilation of religion, philosophy, psychology and physical culture. Man gets complete self confidence through yoga.

The main aim of yoga is to keep the body flexible, healthy, energetic and more fit for the day to day requirements. This is a befitting means of fulfilling the physical and spiritual needs.

The method that Pitanjali rishi has told to keep the body healthy and vigorous through yoga is known as ashtang yoga. It has eight parts:

1. Restrain
2. Observance
3. Posture
4. Regulation of breath and bio-energy
5. Abstraction
6. Concentration
7. Meditation
8. Trance

**1. Restrain :** These are the means of discipline that are related to human mind. By practising them, a person learns nonviolence, truthfulness, abstain from stealing, holiness and abstention.

**2. Observance:** These are the means that are related to the discipline of human body. Purity of body and mind, contentment, determination and the worship of God done only by maintaining cleanliness of body, internal cleaning, can be done by net dhoti and basti.

**3. Posture:** To keep the human body in an particular position for maximum time is known as posture. For example to keep the spinal chord in very straight position and to sit by keeping the legs in a particular position is called Padam Posture.

**4. Regulation of breath and bio-energy :** The process of inspiration and expiration according to some special method by sitting at a plain place is called regulation of breath and bio-energy.

**5. Abstraction:** means to take the mind and senses away from their related action and divert them to think about God.

**6. Concentration:** It means to concentrate mind on some specially desired subject. In this way by concentrating on one side, a great power is inoculated in man which keeps fulfilling his desires.

**7. Meditation:** This is a next higher stage after concentration in which a man rises above the worldly materialism and meditates.

**8. Trance :** At the time of trance, a man's conscience acts mingled with God.

The worldly people can practice the first four parts of yoga i.e. retrain, observance, posture and regulation of breath and bio-energy. But the practice of next four parts i.e. abstraction, concentration, meditation and trance can only be done by yoghis and ascetics.

Yoga fulfils the physical mental, and spiritual objectives of man through scientific methods. Therefore yoga is based on some particular principles and it is a must to follow them. The

main principles of yoga are as under :

1. The place for practising yoga should be neat and clean and airy.
2. Stomach should be empty at the time of practising yoga. If possible, the morning time is the best time. If it is to be done during the day, then at least four hours after taking food, it could be done.
3. The body should be given nutritious diet if we want to make best use of yoga.
4. Concentration of mind is very important for practising yoga which is achieved by observing silence when physical activities are going on, we should divert our concentration towards that side.
5. Yoga should be practised daily.
6. It is very important to take proper rest. Therefore while practising yoga, when the body feels tiredness, then some posture or makkar posture should be done.



**SHAV POSTURE**

*Fig. 29*

7. A person should practise yoga according to his capacity. If any posture is not suited to the body, it should be discontinued. If we practice in some posture by applying excessive force, it may result in dangerous consequences.
8. Before starting to practise any posture, impure air should be completely exhaled from the lungs. It makes the practising of that posture easy and complete benefit could be got from it.
9. While practising yoga, breathing should always be done

through nose. Respiration is related to yoga. It should be done properly so that respiratory system and lungs get fresh air.

10. After exhaling the air, the practice of suspending respiration must be done.
11. After doing one posture, other type of posture should be practised. As after dhanur posture, Pashchim-Uttam posture should be done.



*Fig. 30*



*Fig. 31*

12. Every posture should be practised according to physical capacity and its fixed time.
13. A person should stay in one posture for a short time in the beginning of practising yoga. But as the practice of that posture is regularly done, the duration of time could be increased. Retention of posture at one place should be as per the fixed time.



## Yoga : A way of being Healthy

The objective of yoga is that a person should be physically healthy, mentally strong and alert and discipline in character. Its main characteristics are given as under:

1. Yoga develops the fundamental powers of body and mind. All the postures develop the fundamental powers of man. Through regulation of breath and bio-energy, lungs get maximum air. Exercise of lungs is done and lung diseases remain away.
2. Body remains healthy by practising yoga. Body gets purified. As by doing dhoti activity, stomach gets cleaned, by doing basti activity intestines are cleaned. Clean body always remains healthy.
3. The parts of the body become strong. As by practising Mayur posture, wrists become strong.

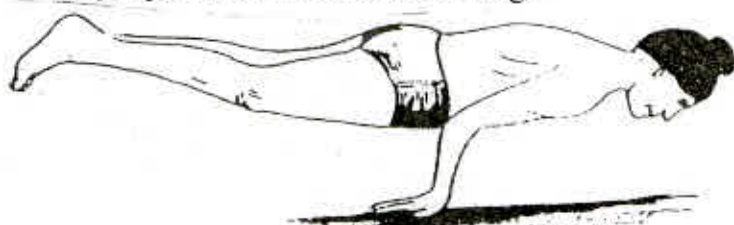


Fig. 32 MUYUR POSTURE



PLOUGH POSTURE

Fig. 33

4. Parts of the body remain flexible as by practising Dhanur bow posture and plough posture, flexibility of spine is increased.

5. While practising different postures, all the organs of the body come into action. By practising different postures the organs become strong, at the same time, all the body systems start proper functioning.

By regulation of breath and bio-energy, exercise of lungs is done. The muscles become strong and can in hale maximum air, then the whole functioning of respiration gets regulated.

6. Yoga keeps the human body in right posture. It is a quality of a good personality to keep the body in proper order. As by practising padam posture, shoulders remain erect and belly does not bulge out. By practising bricks posture we don't get knock-knees.

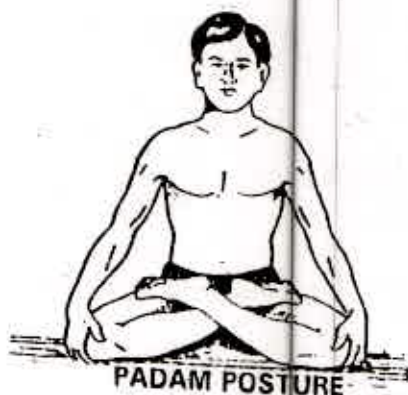


Fig. 34

7. By observing appropriate postures many diseases gets cured and many problems are prevented. By practising regulation of breath and bio-energy, lungs remains disease free. Diabetes gets cured by vajjar and matshender postures.
8. Yoga inculcates mental discipline restrain and observance help in exercising a check over evil human desires. A

person who practises restrain, does not steal and fellows non-violence. If one practises restrain and observance, then he over comes the human feelings.

9. Yoga makes the human intellect sharp. By practising regulation of breath and bio-energy, clean air is inhaled. Blood circulation becomes fast. Proper diet and air is carried to each blood cell then the while body and mind becomes active and brain works fast. Its sees posture increases our intellect. Memory becomes sharp.
10. Yoga helps in removing physical and mental fatigue. It we get physically and mentally tired while fulfilling our routine schedule of life, then to refresh our body and mind, yoga offers many good exercises. Shav posture removes a person's fatigue.
11. Yoga is a good means of attaining mental balance and happiness. The glow on the face a person practising padam posture indicates his peace of mind and happiness.
12. A person who has control over his breathing while practising yoga, makes all the body activities to happen slowly. It brings rhythm in body which spends the body energy with great care.

### EXERCISE

1. What is yoga?
2. Which are the eight parts of Ashtang yoga of Pitanjali rishi? Write briefly about them.
3. What are the main principles of yoga?
4. "Yoga is a means to remain healthy" express your views about it?
5. Write uses of any five postures.
6. What is meant by Ashtang yoga ?