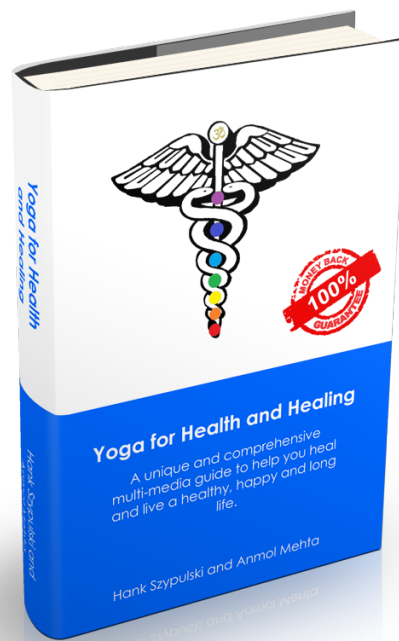


Yogic Guide to Health and Well Being, An Instructional & Reference Guide

Anmol Mehta and Hank Szypulski



Promote a Healthy Lifestyle Through the Use of the
Profound Sciences of:

Meditation - Yoga - Pranayama -
Ayurveda

Fully Illustrated
Hosted on www.AnmolMehta.com

Acknowledgement:

This work is only possible due to the contributions of thousands of yogis over the centuries. Each of us today who look to the Science of Yoga to better our lives owe the benefits reaped to the years of tireless effort made by the previous masters of Yoga.

These yogis often spent their entire lives in the jungles, forests and caves perfecting many of the asanas, pranayamas, mudras, bandhas and meditations which are now contained within this healing guide.

We all owe a HUGE Pranam to those who gave this wisdom to us! _/_

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About The Authors:

Anmol Mehta

Anmol's story is quite simple. He has, from a very young age, been extremely passionate about meditation and yoga. His website and teachings are the product of that passion and the desire to share with the readers this profound wisdom, so that these great spiritual technologies can help them reach their maximum potential in life. These sciences have helped him see the True Non-Dual Nature of Reality and he hopes to bring about the same awakening in the readers.

Anmol is the author of several books, such as *Amazing Insights*, and several yoga and meditation training manuals. He resides in New Jersey, where he runs the *Mastery of Meditation and Yoga Website* and the *Silent Mind Meditation Center*.

Hank Szypulski

Hank Szypulski received his Yoga and Meditation teaching certifications from Anmol Mehta; and, has completed additional coursework in Chakra Meditation, Buddhism and Reiki. He teaches Yoga and Meditation at a Hindu Temple near his home in Clifton Park, New York, and, has independently studied the fields of Ayurveda and healing through Yoga.

In late 2006, Hank received a kidney transplant after having spent nearly two years on dialysis. His personal experience with poor health has motivated him to study Yoga with devotion and interest. His personal work has resulted in a healthier life and deep experiences of non-dual reality. It is his deep desire that anyone who is faced with stress or health conditions experience the benefits of the Yogic principles in this guide to make the very most of life.

Healing Guide Cross Reference Chart:

Health Issue:	Poses & Sets:	Pranayama(s):	Mudra/Bandha(s):	Meditation(s):
Acid Reflux		Sheetali (p.268), Seetkari (p.294)	Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Anti-Aging	Bow Pose (p. 147), Ardha Chakrasana (p.234), Cobra (p.98)	Kapalbhati (p.251)		
Asthma	Bow Pose (p. 147), Matsyasana (p.245), Bridge Pose (p.102), Camel Pose (p.134)	Kapalbhati (p.251)	Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Back Pain	Back Stretching Pose (p.82), Triangle Pose (p.86), Palm Tree (p.91), Cat/Cow (p.94), Bridge (p.102), Stomach Grind (p.108), Spine Flex (p.109), Yoga Twist (p.109), Ardhakati Chakrasana (p.231), Ardha Chakrasana (p.234), Padhastanasana (p.237)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Blood Pressure	Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240), Corpse (p.73)	Sheetali (p.268), Ujjayi (P.282), Seetkari (p.294)		
Circulation	Camel Pose (p.134), Frog Pose (p.150), Shoulder Stand (p.175), Boat Pose (p.187), Plow (p.200), Prasaritha Padhastanasana (p.242)	Kapalbhati (p.251)	Maha Bandha (p.317), Buddhi Mudra (p.307), Raja Kriya (p.322)	
Constipation	Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240), Matsyasana (p.245), Crow Pose (p.171)			
Depression	Prasarita Padhastanasana (p.242), Padhastanasana (p.237)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Detox (Total Body)	Boat Pose (p.187), Liver Detox Set (p.212)	Breath of Fire (p.247), Kapalbhati (p.251), 4-Part (p.256), Anuloma Viloma (P.259), Lion (p.264), Bhastrika (p.290)	Apan (p.308)	
Digestion	Back Stretching Pose (p.82), Cat/Cow (p.94), Bridge (p.102), Stomach Grind (p.108), Spine Flex (p.109), Camel Pose (p.134), Bow Pose (p.147), Locust Pose (p.155), Modified Wheel (p.179), Boat Pose (p.187), Wheel (p.197), Plow (p.200), Kundalini Lotus (p.207), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240), Cobra (p.98), Downward Facing Dog (p.144)	Breath of Fire (p.247), Kapalbhati (p.251), Sheetali (p.268), Sodarshan (p.272), Bhastrika (p.290)	Maha Bandha (p.317), Buddhi Mudra (p.307), Raja Kriya (p.322)	
Ears (Auditory System)	Butterfly (p.78), Cat/Cow (p.94), Camel Pose (p.134), Crow Pose (p.171), Cobra (p.98)			Sound Awareness (p.329)
Elimination		Kapalbhati (p.251)	Apan (p.308)	
Emotional Trauma & Imbalances	Cat/Cow (p.94), Spine Flex (p.109), Jesus Pose (p.121)	Kapalbhati (p.251), Anuloma Viloma (P.259), Sheetali (p.268), Sodarshan (p.272), Surya Bedhi (p.279)	Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Endocrine System	Boat Pose (p.187), Shoulder Stand (p.175), Ardha Chakrasana (p.234)		Maha Bandha (p.317), Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Erectile Dysfunction	Male Sexual Health Yoga Set (p.218)		Vajroli (p.314)	
Eye Disorder (Optic Nerve)	Cat/Cow (p.94), Cobra (p.98), Yoga Eye Care Set (p.228)		Pran (p.310), Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	Third Eye Meditations (p.343), Trataka (p.348)
Excess Gas	Liver Detox Set (p.212), Ardhakati Chakrasana (p.231), Padhastanasana (p.237)	Kapalbhati (p.251)		
Fatigue	Triangle Pose (p.86), Palm Tree (p.91), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240), Matsyasana (p.245)	Surya Bedhi (p.279)	Surya Mudra (p.304), Pran (p.310)	
Headache	Ardha Chakrasana (p.234), Prasaritha Padhastanasana (p.242), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Insecurity & Fear	Crow Pose (p.171)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Immune System	Bridge (p.102), Plow (p.200), Shoulder Stand (p.175)	Sodarshan (p.272)		
Insomnia	Corpse (p.73), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240)	Sheetali (p.268), Ujjayi (P.282), Seetkari (p.294)		All
Lack of Charisma & Presence	Eagle Pose (p.115)			
Lack of Compassion	Jesus Pose (p.121), Crow Pose (p.171)			Zazen (p.337)
Lack of Confidence and Self-Esteem	Eagle Pose (p.115), Archer Pose (p.118)	Surya Bedhi (p.279)		
Lack of Willpower	Jesus Pose (p.121), Plank (p.125), Criss-cross (p.160), Elbow Platform (p.183), Boat Pose (p.187), Yoga Ab Crunches (p.193), Stretch Pose (p.112), Core Abdominal Power Set (p.165)	1 Minute Yogic (p.286)		
Lack of Mental Clarity and Focus	Shoulder Stand (p.175), Palm Tree (p.91), Eagle Pose (p.115), Archer Pose (p.118), Crane Pose (p.203)		Maha Bandha (p.317)	So Hum (p.333), Zazen (p.337), Trataka (p.348)
Liver Detox (p.212)	Liver Detox Set (p.212), Ardhakati Chakrasana (p.231), Padhastanasana (p.237), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Lymph System Health	Camel Pose (p.134)			
Menstrual Pain	Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240), Matsyasana (p.245)			
Neck and Shoulder Pain	Neck Rolls (p.110), Prasaritha Padhastanasana (p.242), Padhastanasana (p.237)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Nervous System Health	Corpse (p.73), Eagle Pose (p.115), Archer Pose (p.118), Plank (p.125), Downward Facing Dog (p.144), Elbow Platform (p.183), Wheel (p.197), Crow Pose (p.171), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240)	Breath of Fire (p.247), Anuloma Viloma (P.259), Sodarshan (p.272), Bhastrika (p.290)	Maha Bandha (p.317), Raja Kriya (p.322)	
Obesity	Back Stretching Pose (p.82), Deep Knee Bends (p.128), Chair Pose (p.138), Bow Pose (p.147), Crow Pose (p.171), Boat Pose (p.187), Frog Pose (p.150), Archer Pose (p.118), All Ab exercises, Padhastanasana (p.237)	Kapalbhati (p.251), Bhastrika (p.290)		
Prostate	Prasarita Padhastanasana (p.242), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240)			
Reproductive Organs	Cobra (p.98), Bridge (p.102), Modified Wheel (p.179), Wheel (p.197)			
Respiratory Health	Eagle Pose (p.115), Archer Pose (p.118), Camel Pose (p.134), Bow Pose (p.147), Frog Pose (p.150), Criss-cross (p.160), Modified Wheel (p.179), Boat Pose (p.187), Wheel (p.197), Ardha Chakrasana (p.234), Matsyasana (p.245)	Breath of Fire (p.247), Kapalbhati (p.251), 4-Part (p.256), Anuloma Viloma (P.259), Lion (p.264), Sodarshan (p.272), 1 Minute Yogic (p.286), Bhastrika (p.290)	Maha Bandha (p.317), Buddhi Mudra (p.307), Surya Mudra (p.304), Raja Kriya (p.322)	
Sciatic Nerve Flexibility	Back Stretching Pose (p.82)			
Sexual Fitness & Virility	Male Sexual Health Yoga Set (p.218), Deep Knee Bends (p.128), Camel Pose (p.134), Chair Pose (p.138), Frog Pose (p.150), Plow (p.200), Kundalini Lotus (p.207), Sat Kriya (p.226)		Vajroli (p.314) - Men, Sahajoli - Women (p.316)	
Shyness/Timidity	Eagle Pose (p.115), Archer Pose (p.118)	Breath of Fire (p.247), Surya Bedhi (p.279)	Surya Mudra (p.304), Bear Grip (p.312)	
Sinusitis	Ardha Chakrasana (p.234), Jaanu Sirsasana (p.240)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Stress	Corpse (p.73), Archer Pose (p.118), Locust Pose (p.155)	Sheetali (p.268), Anuloma Viloma (P.259)		All
Thyroid and Parathyroid	Cat/Cow (p.94), Cobra (p.98), Camel Pose (p.134), Shoulder Stand (p.175), Modified Wheel (p.197), Plow (p.200)		Buddhi Mudra (p.307)	
Verticose Veins	Shoulder Stand (p.175)			

PLEASE READ FIRST

Yogic Guide Overview:

This manual is the official text of the “Yogic Guide to Health and Well Being”. Please read through the instructions as well, as it explains how to use this manual to promote health and healing using yoga, meditation, pranayama, and, the basic principles of ayurvedic health.

The course is a multi-media rich home study course. The material needed for study and practice is contained in this training manual, and also in the videos and MP3s that are online on [Mastery of Meditation and Yoga](#), and linked to from this manual.

The guide is designed so that you may read from beginning to end and learn the physical performance of each pose, etc and study the health related benefits of each. If you feel confident in your physical abilities in Asanas and Pranayama, this guide may be used as a useful reference to poses, breath exercises, mudras and meditations that help you heal in specific areas. Please be aware that care must be taken to read and understand each exercise so that it may be used correctly. For example, a pose may benefit healthy maintenance of the back muscles that are in proper working order, however, that pose may not be suitable to perform when the back muscles are injured.

How to Use This Manual:

I would like to mention a few important words about how to best use this training manual.

- Please note that this entire manual has active live links. All links are in [blue and underlined](#). When you move your cursor over the link, it will display the target page and change into a small hand. To visit the target page simple click the link and it will take you to the respective page on the website.
- Please note that this manual is a collection of articles from the Mastery of Meditation and Yoga website, as well as some special articles that are not online. These articles all put together, in the order given, create the Yoga Training Program. I have preserved all the links within the original articles so you can easily access the related materials as well if it interests you. All this took a lot of work, I hope you all benefit from it 😊.

All sections with videos, alert you using the following statement:

"THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK"

You can get more information on meditation, yoga and spiritual growth on my website <http://www.AnmolMehta.com>. All information there is available for free. I also welcome your feedback and you can email me at anmol@anmolmehta.com.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER – PLEASE READ

This manual advances health claims that are based on centuries of research and study in the field of Yoga. This manual in no way takes the place of modern medical advice and treatment and we urge you to seek the assistance of a medical professional before using the information in this course to design your personal yoga program.

Please check with your health care professional before starting any exercise or yoga program. The information provided within is intended for use under professional instruction and guidance. It is not a substitute for medical care and attention. Please use common sense and walk the middle path as you develop your practice. We are not responsible for the consequences of the exercises or programs. The same applies to all the other material provided here, it is provided AS-IS with no warranties or guarantees. We are not responsible for, and will not compensate in any way for, any loss or damage related directly or indirectly to the information in this manual or on the AnmolMehta.com website. Thank you.

“Health is a state of complete harmony of the body, mind and spirit. When one is free from physical disabilities and mental distractions, the gates of the soul open.”

B.K.S. Iyengar

CHAPTER 1:

Introduction to the Universal Principles of Yoga

The quote atop this page is one of my favorites. BKS Iyengar was the student and much younger brother-in-law of the late Sri Krishnamacharya. Krishnamacharya lived to 100 years and is considered by many to be the father of modern Hatha Yoga and Vinyasa. Iyengar himself is known for advancing Yoga in the West and promoting the use of yoga props like mats, blocks, straps. Even more importantly, Iyengar continued the advancement of yoga asanas and pranayamas in the treatment of disease.

As a child and young adult, BKS Iyengar suffered from numerous diseases including Malaria, Typhoid, Influenza and Tuberculosis. Young Iyengar missed attending school for the most part and had often wondered if life was worth living when dealing with so many physical ailments.

Within a few years of taking up Yoga practice at the suggestion of Krishnamacharya, Iyengar had become well enough to be a disciple of Krishnamacharya and eventually travel with him throughout India promoting the art of Yoga.

As of writing this manual today, BKS Iyengar will be 95 years old next month and continues to be active in India promoting the use of yoga to improve health. This is amazing for someone who faced as many health challenges as he did. Iyengar's life serves as a reminder to us all that living a yogic life can be thoroughly transformative and often consequently lengthy as well. 😊

Introduction to the Universal Principles of Yoga:

Yoga is a time tested, powerful tool to help you blossom and reach your full human potential. The seeds are all within you; Yoga is the water, the sunlight, the nutrients and the love they need in order to make your life vibrant, beautiful and full of sweet fragrance. It is not a religion; it is really a science with which to develop your body, mind and spirit. The ultimate goal of Yoga, which literally means "Union", is to reunite you with the Universal Source. You may call this Universal Source by any name you wish, God, Brahman, Buddha Nature, Christ Consciousness, Krishna Consciousness, Allah, etc, Yoga is a pathway to bring you to the realization that you and this Universal Source are inseparably One.

There are many branches of Yoga, such as Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Jyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Nada Yoga, Karma Yoga, Kundalini Yoga to name a few. These all have one goal, unification with the Universal Source; but, each follows a different path to get there. Depending on your personality one or the other path may suit you better.

Here is a description of some of the major branches of Yoga:

- **Bhakti Yoga:** Emphasizes love as the pathway to liberation and Union. This branch attracts those who are emotional by nature

and have a strong longing to be reunited with their beloved creator.

- **Jyana Yoga:** Emphasizes the intellectual and philosophical approach to penetrate the illusion of dualistic reality. The practitioners of Jyana Yoga generally have a sharp mind and swift intellect. They use the analytical powers of discrimination and detached awareness to make progress.
- **Karma Yoga:** Emphasizes right action and selfless service as the path to moksha (liberation). This school is for those who have a strong desire to help others and have a capacity for work and action.
- **Kundalini Yoga:** Emphasizes the activation of Kundalini Shakti for enlightenment. This is probably the most powerful form of Yoga. It is for those with a strong will and a passion for the Supreme and the mystical.
- **Raja Yoga:** Considered the Scientific approach, this branch emphasizes Sage Patanjali's 8-step path to Self-Realization. Raja Yoga is for those who have a holistic approach to life.
- **Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga and Nada Yoga:** These forms of Yoga use the powerful science of Sound Vibrations to dissolve obstacles and empower the Yogi. They are often a part of some of the Yoga systems listed above and suit those with a devotional attitude.

In this article I will expand on Raja Yoga, as it is one of the most popular and prevalent Yoga system in use today.

As indicated above Raja Yoga employs Sage Patanjali's 8 step path to achieve Union with the Supreme, also called the 8 limbs of Yoga (ashtanga) thus also the name Asthanga Yoga. This 8-step system

consists of the following parts. Yamas, Niyamas, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and finally Samadhi. This 8 step path is designed to bring about physical, emotional and mental harmony; and in the advanced practices of Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi lead to the cessation of thoughts allowing the mind to realize that Reality is indeed Singular, Whole and indivisible.

Here is a description of the 8 limbs of Raja Yoga:

1. **Yamas:** Yamas are self-restraints. These are non-violence, truth, control of sexual urges, stealing and covetousness (greed).
2. **Niyamas:** Niyamas are self-observances. There are 5 niyamas. These are contentment, self-study, austerity, purity and devotion to the Lord.
3. **Asanas:** Physical poses and postures.
4. **Pranayama:** Control of the Vital Energy (prana) with the use of breathing exercises.
5. **Pratyahara:** Withdrawal of the senses and disassociation of the consciousness from the outside environment.
6. **Dharana:** Concentration.
7. **Dhyana:** Meditation.
8. **Samadhi:** The Union and Identification with the Supreme Consciousness.

Sincere and regular practice of Raja Yoga promotes health, happiness and insight. Although the ultimate goal of Yoga is Union with the Supreme, many material benefits are also obtained by its practice.

Today, many diseases and ailments are treated via the use of Yoga asanas and pranayamas, and the stress reducing benefits of Yoga meditation are becoming more and more valuable to us given our hectic and frantic lifestyles. Furthermore, the principles of truth, humility and other high values that Yoga promotes help to offset some of the excessive materialism and greed that is eroding the spirit, joy and peace of our society today.

The most important aspect of Yoga Philosophy is that it is based on Self-Realization. In other words, you are given the tools required, and using them you bring about the necessary transformations in yourself to reach your highest potential in life. It is now often said, that the next great Yoga and Meditation teachers will arise from the West. This is because generally the West has an empirical approach to things, as opposed to superstition and blind faith of the East. If something works it is embraced and utilized, if something does not prove to work, it is discarded as junk. This is probably the reason why Yoga has grown in such popularity here in the West - because it works. So dive in and reap the benefits.

Top 10 Health Benefits of Yoga

Benefits of Yoga

Yoga is currently taking its final exam. Even though this science dates back many thousands of years, it has only recently come to the West. This is where Yoga is being empirically tested. The Western mind demands results and evidence, if none are produced, the system does not survive. This is a valuable approach and Yoga is currently being put through the rigors of this process. So far Yoga is passing with flying colors. Don't get me wrong, its not that the East did not expect that, it's just that this approach filters out the fraudulent and frivolous methodologies, which might otherwise survive simply because of

superstition and fear, and the East is just as happy that this is being done as the West. This scrutinizing process results in separating the stones from the diamonds and the diamond that is Yoga is starting to shine though bright and clear.

Over the last three to four decades a great deal of research has been done by the medical community and they now, more and more, recognize the health benefits of Yoga. Below, I will highlight the top 10 health benefits that Yoga bestows and I hope it will inspire all of you to take up this wonderful practice in some capacity and reap the rich rewards as well.

The health benefits have been divided into 3 categories. The Physical Health Benefits of Yoga, Emotional Health Benefits of Yoga and the Mental Health Benefits of Yoga. A short explanation is given along with each benefit to help you understand better the mechanisms that Yoga employs to bestow it.

Physical Health Benefits of Yoga:

1. Energy: Yoga exercises, breath control training (pranayama) and use of yoga body locks (bandhas) all work to activate and balance your energy pathways, giving you the vitality and power you need to maximize your potential.

2. Strength: By strength here we don't just mean physical muscular strength, although that will benefit greatly as well due to the steady holding of yoga poses and the exercises that yoga incorporates, but also the strength of your internal physiological systems. Strength of your immune system, nervous system, digestive system, respiratory system, circulatory system, reproductive system, etc.

3. Healing: The power of Yoga to heal ailments and cure diseases is becoming more and more an integral part of mainstream medical

practice and treatment methods. This ability of Yoga to heal also promotes longevity.

4. Flexibility: Yoga postures (asanas) are perhaps the best type of exercises you can do to improve flexibility. Flexibility is essential for avoiding injuries as well as for the health of the joints, tendons and muscles.

Emotional Health Benefits of Yoga:

5. Peace: Yoga meditations and practice methodology promotes a greater awareness and appreciation of the present moment, which calms the mind and allows the peace deep within to surface.

6. Joy: With the maturing of a Yoga practice, the beauty and depth of life become more apparent and the spontaneous joy of existence emerges.

7. Compassion: Yoga values and philosophy, along with the practice of yoga meditations, dissolves one's egocentric reality, thus developing other mindedness, thoughtfulness, generosity and compassion.

Mental Health Benefits of Yoga:

8. Brain Development: Yoga breathing exercises and yoga meditations develop parts of the brain that are normally dormant. Once these parts are activated the power of intuition, as well as other latent powers are unleashed. In addition as the brain develops so does your intelligence and clarity of thoughts.

9. Concentration: The requirement of many Yoga meditations to keep the mind focused on a single object or mantra (sound vibrations), helps to dramatically increase your power of concentration and focused attention.

10. Awareness: Yoga can simply be called the Science of Awareness. This is its primary purpose. To refine and increase awareness so that

you can penetrate the veil of the ordinary dualistic mind and encounter your Divine Nature within.

CHAPTER 2:

Introduction to Ayurveda

~ Additional input in this chapter provided by Laura Harrison of Enlighten Yoga, Haganan, NY. Thanks Laura!!! ~

The term "Ayurveda" is derived from the Sanskrit words "Ayur" (Life) and "Veda" (Knowledge). Ayurveda may be seen as a source of knowledge which enables us to live a healthier and more contented life in balance with earthly nature and our individual natures as unique human beings. The purpose of this chapter in our Guide is to introduce you to the basic principles within the vast science of Ayurveda so that you may pursue a specific area of interest to meet your individual needs.

Ayurvedic doctors and practitioners are the qualified professionals within this field; some of these professions require advanced medical degrees and years of specific learning and practice. Before considering self-treating serious illnesses with Ayurvedic remedies, we strongly recommend you consider obtaining advice from a qualified Ayurvedic professional on what course of action is best for you individually.

The idea of natural Ayurvedic treatments may sound interesting but what is Ayurveda as a body of knowledge really? How do we bring this knowledge into our daily lives? First we need an understanding of some key terms and theory....

THE DOSHAS

In Ayurveda, the human form and mind (or personality) is seen as falling under the influences of three doshas (or biological constitutions). The doshas themselves are derived from the elements

of Air, Fire, Water and Earth. So, the doshas may be seen as the influence of these elements within our bodies.

Ideally, a balance between the doshas exists within us thereby enabling us to handle whatever life throws our way. However, this ideal state of balance is rare and Ayurveda provides us with methods to identify and correct imbalances and return to harmony.

Central to this balance in Ayurveda is an understanding of the three doshas that reside within us. They are known as Vata, Pitta and Kapha:

Vata – Vata is the Air element and represents cold and dry. Late Fall through Winter is the Vata period in the earth's cycle. An excess of influence from this dosha can cause physical ailments like dry skin and nervousness. Also, an airy unfocused personality can be the result of excess Vata.

Pitta – Pitta is the element of Fire. Pitta may be seen to represent as the forces of heat and change. The Pitta seasons are very late spring through summer. An over-abundance of Pitta is often characterized by an aggressive and angry nature; and, physically as hyper-activity, red skin and heavier perspiration.

Kapha – Kapha is the elements of Earth and Water and represents cool and dampness. Kapha's influence in us tends to be grounded-ness, prosperity and calm. However, an over-abundance of Kapha can lead to greed, mental slowness and lethargy.

Since the negative aspects of dosha imbalances are often what is discussed, it is very important to remember that no dosha or its elemental influence is "bad" or should ever be completely removed from any of our lives. All doshas are essential ingredients to a happy and healthy life when they reside within us in harmony. Negative

effects only arise when the doshas have excessive or deficient influence in us.

For example, grounded-ness and calm (Kapha) are essential to our lives but not to the point where they may sap our initiative and prevent us from carrying out necessary tasks. Therefore, Kapha must be balanced in this regard with Pitta which provides us with the necessary drive to manage our lives.

Finding Your Current Dosha Balance or Dominance:

Very few of us manage to carry a favorable healthy balance between the three and largely avoid most health and personal problems on a fairly regular basis. However, the vast majority of us are over-influenced or deficient in one or even two of the doshas.

Ideally we all should be evaluated by a competent Ayurvedic professional to determine our dosha influences and any excesses or deficiencies. Further, it is important that dosha influence be evaluated correctly (and re-checked while we are under Ayurvedic treatment) as treatments and lifestyle changes are based upon this dosha balance analysis. If the dosha balance analysis is inaccurate, the treatments would likely also be inaccurate and may lead to exacerbating the very symptoms of imbalance we are trying to remedy.

With that said, online dosha “tests” can be of use to us to determine if we may have an imbalance, and, the websites these tests are on contain important information regarding possible Ayurvedic treatments and some even point us to qualified Ayurvedic practitioners. We have found the following websites to have useful online dosha tests and other information:

<http://www.naturesformulary.com/contents/dosha-test>

<http://doshaquiz.chopra.com/>

Managing and Treating Dosha Imbalances:

Once a competent dosha analysis is complete, and any over or under abundances are brought to light, there are a variety of treatments that may be used to return our doshas (or our lives) to balance. These include:

- 1) De-toxification – De-toxification can be performed in a variety of ways. Common home treatments for de-tox include performing specific Yogasanas and Pranayamas (for one example of a detox method, please see the Panting Dog or Lion Pose on page 264 of this guide), and, making changes to our lifestyle. More advanced treatments (Panchakarma) *that should only be performed under the guidance of a qualified practitioner* include the use of steam (Swedana) or heat to remove toxins, and, bodily purging.
- 2) Yogasanas, Pranayamas, Meditations – poses and breathing techniques can be very useful ways to change dosha balance. For example, a person suffering from an over-abundance of Pitta influence can employ asanas that calm the body and mind. Further, Pranayamas such as Anuloma Viloma can be used to increase calm and Kapha influence; while Pranayamas such as Breath of Fire may be avoided or used sparingly as this Pranayama increases Pitta influence by energizing and heating the body. Please see the reference guide table at the beginning of this guide as an aid to choosing asanas, Pranayamas, mudras and meditations to influence dosha imbalances.
- 3) Food – Food choice is an excellent method to adjust dosha influences. Food is from nature and the elements of earth, water, air and fire and each food has its own unique impact on our doshas. Some foods serve to increase certain doshic

influences while others serve to decrease influence. Some foods even have the ability to reduce an over-abundance of one doshic type while serving at the same time to increase the influence of another dosha that we may be deficient in. For example, hot and spicy foods may be used by someone with an over-abundance of Kapha while the same hot foods must be avoided by someone experiencing an excess of Pitta. It is beyond the ability of this guide to evaluate each food and describe its dosha impacts. Excellent charts exist online and in books; personally, for a good start I recommend the "Food Table" within "The Handbook of Ayurveda" by Dr. Shantha Godagama, pages 66-67.

- 4) Other methods – There are various other methods available such as oil and silk massages for stress, oil-pulling for oral and overall bodily care, mealtime adjustment, healthy lifestyle habits such as ceasing to smoke or drink alcohol, establishing beneficial sleep cycles, nasal irrigation, etc etc etc.

SAMPLE Ayurvedic Treatment for Healing and Addiction:

The following is from the Mastery of Meditation website and provides us an example of how to begin to approach Ayurvedic treatment.

[8 Step Ayurvedic Treatment for Healing and Addiction:](#)

Posted in **[Ayurveda, Detox & Cleanse, Emotional Mastery, Health and Wellbeing](#)** by Anmol Mehta

Today's guest article is really special. It is an excellent guide on how to use the great power of Ayurveda to heal yourself naturally and nurture yourself back to health. Although the article is specifically about Ayurvedic treatment for addiction, the principles and methods discussed apply to any ailment or disease. This article is from Dr.

Rajiv Parti, who is a rare combination of both Western medical training and Eastern holistic healing expertise and he shares his knowledge and wisdom on his excellent website and blog www.drraj.com. I highly recommend stopping by and checking out his site.

If you would like to be a guest author on Mastery of Meditation and Yoga, please email me at anmol@anmolmehta.com.

8 Steps Ayurvedic Treatment for Addiction and More – Part 1 by Rajiv Parti, MD (aka Dr. Raj)

Ayurveda's treatment for addiction recovery is a process: a lifestyle and a journey into wellness. It is an invitation to participate in our own wellness and healing, to co-create our full potential and to live every future day with a commitment to nurturing and valuing ourselves.

Ayurveda is a whole person non-invasive, non-pharmaceutical approach aimed at perfect balance – not a method in which we become pharmaceutically dependent patients. It teaches that all material forms in the entire Universe – including the human being – are made up of different combinations of five essential elements, the Mahabhutas. These Mahabhutas are: Space, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth.

Differing combinations of these essential elements create an infinity of material forms: differentiating a flower from a river, a mountain from a cloud, a human being from a star; But every material thing contains a combination of these elements – the cosmos and we are made of the same materials.

Ayurveda teaches that in human beings there are three dominant combinations of these elements that give us each our specific body mind constitutions: these three constitutions are called 'doshas', each one of the representing a Vital dose of the essential elements in our own individual make up: Vata (the Air element), Pitta (the Fire element) and Kapha (the Earth element):

1. STEP ONE: Identifying the Doshas

Typically each one of us will have a dominant dosha that determines our overriding body mind constitution. We can be categorized as a planet of Vata types, Pitta types or Kapha types – and our inclinations, capacities and nature will be determined by our dosha.

Vata types tend to be highly creative, quick thinking, quick to learn and forget, lean, physically and mentally agile, involved in many things at one time, and prone to anxiety and overwhelm.

Pitta types tend to be leaders, extremely focused, goal oriented, driven physically and mentally and prone to bouts of anger, possible aggression, frustration and impatience.

Kapha types tend to be placid, easy going, slower and heavier physically and prone to being anxious to avoid conflict, and experiencing mental and physical inertia or fatigue.

When the doshas are in perfect balance, we humans are well, functioning optimally, mentally and physically, living with vitality and in ease. When the doshas are disturbed, our wellbeing is obstructed, our mental and physical functioning is impaired, and we will live with fatigue and dis-ease.

At the heart of all Ayurvedic treatments therefore is the intention to restore balance to the doshas. Once this is achieved, wellness flows naturally.

Having diagnosed the individual's dosha type and which doshas are experiencing stress, treatment will now focus on the removal of the stress.

For this the therapeutic practices of Ayurveda center on creating restfulness, restoring calmness, nurturing the body-mind. The mind, and the subtle energy of the body-mind are all equal targets for therapeutic applications.

What you can do at home:

1. Find out your Dosha at <http://doshaquiz.chopra.com/>

Creating a stress free zone to allow the doshas to come in to natural balance, and support the individual's natural intelligence at the physical, emotional and mental levels to re-emerge then becomes the foundation for all further treatments.

2. STEP 2 : Rebuilding the Body: Re-storing – Ojas

The Ayurvedic texts identify a substance called 'Ojas' as being the Vital force of the body. Like honey is the essence of flowers, in the same way, Ojas is considered to be a secreted essence from our tissues,

muscles, blood, plasma, fats and bones: produced by all healthy cells, imparting strength, radiance, luster, and power to the body and mind.

In addition, this Ojas is being continually depleted – and ultimately the depletion of Ojas will eventually cause death. One of the main areas of focus therefore is restore Ojas in the body. Ojas is mainly cultivated through diet – the useful product of food materials.

Therefore in Ayurveda, there is a major emphasis on diet. Treatment should center around foods that support the restoration of Ojas, and also support sup: green vegetables, kale, parsley, spinach, rice, honey, almonds, strawberries, mangos, split mung lentils, amaranth, cooked lightly in spices that are also Ojas enhancing: cumin, coriander, ginger, fennel, cinnamon.

What can you do at home:

1. Cut out foods that are processed or pre-cooked
2. Stock up on lots and lots of green leafy vegetables
3. Try cooking with fresh spices: fennel or cinnamon or ginger

3. STEP 3: Restoring Natural Intelligence : Cultivating Tejas

Vitality in Ayurveda is not something that occurs only in the body. Tejas is the radiant Vitality of the body-mind's innate intelligence: the intelligence by which our cells innately perform a myriad of miracles – carrying oxygen molecules in our blood or releasing neurotransmitters or metabolizing nutrients from foods and identifying waste materials – simultaneously, continuously. Tejas is also the means by which we can digest and process mental thoughts and impressions, and experience higher perceptual capacities; Having strong Tejas therefore gives us digestive and information processing power at the mental and physical levels: cellular metabolic energy.

Restoring Tejas would involve calming the nervous system, through a variety of techniques that involve Panchakarma (a series of detoxification and purification therapies) and 'Rasayana' – the practice of destroying disease through the conservation transformation and revitalization of energy.

4. STEP FOUR: Detoxification and Purification: Panchakarma

Pancha means 'five' in Sanskrit and 'karma' means action.

Panchakarma is a unique set of five detoxifying Ayurvedic treatments administered in three phases: the preparation, cleansing, and rejuvenation phases.

The first phase is oleation – ingesting and applying pure essential oils in order to mobilize the accumulated toxins in the body. The first of the five actions of Panchakarma here is '**Swedana**' – the application of hot steam and warm oil therapies that loosen toxins and encourage their flow to the GI tract for elimination.

The second phase is the cleansing phase: now that toxins have been mobilized, their elimination is focused upon through a further three actions, all of which are administered gently through the application of medicinal herbal oils: **Basti** (intestinal irrigation); **Nasya** (nasal irrigation) and **Vamana** (oral elimination)

The final phase of Panchakarma is **Rasayana**: here medicinal and Ayurvedic oils are applied in uniquely restorative bodywork and massage techniques. Most famous of these is the practice of '**Shirodhana**' – where warm oil is poured continuously on to the center of the forehead between the two eyes: acting as a powerful pacifier for the entire nervous system.

Further Rasayana would be pursued through Ayurvedic herb prescriptions using the healing properties of plants and flowers, for example:

Ashwaghandha – proven in some 216 medical to: confer immune system protection, combat the effects of stress, improve learning, memory, and reaction time, reduce anxiety and depression without causing drowsiness, reduce brain-cell degeneration.

Guggulu – purifying herbs. It cleanses unhealthy tissues, increases the white blood cell count and rejuvenates the body.

Brahmi – nerve tonic. Ayurvedic teas and tonics would be included in the diet every day to enhance healing, reduce stress for the rebuilding of tissues: pumpkin is a known sedative, nutmeg is a nervine, and chamomile is a digestive tonic and known sedative nervine herb.

What You Can Do At Home:

1. You can order many of these herbs and teas are available at reputable herbalists, and my own favorite source for these is at world

center of excellence, with whom I have personally trained, The Chopra Center: <http://store.chopra.com/showitems.asp?deptcode1=717>

5. STEP FIVE: Healing and Revitalization – Prana

Prana is the vital energy brought to us through oxygenation and breath. It's a known fact that where there is stress, breath is shallower and therefore oxygenation is limited. Where breathing is not happening optimally, oxygenation is limited and there is impaired cellular regeneration and mental functioning.

Learning how to breath, and how to move Prana – vital energy – around the body, especially to those parts that feel wounded or disturbed is a huge component of Ayurvedic care called Pranayama. There are several Pranayama exercises and practices – from Ujjain breath, Kapalabhatti and others.

Yoga is more than physical exercise: yoga is the art of moving Prana – vital life energy – through the body for healing. Yoga therefore becomes another essential instrument for healing in the Ayurvedic approach to addiction recovery.

What You Can Do At Home:

1. Learn about Pranayama and breathing exercises by enrolling at your local yoga studio or go online at www.anmolmehta.com to see a number of videos on different Pranayama exercises you can do at home.

6. STEP SIX Yoga – Replacing Old Bad Habits With New Good Habits

Yoga is the sister science of Ayurveda. It works in addiction because in yoga the body and the mind are simultaneously calmed, with the intentions of practicing acceptance and of changing unhealthy habits. The practice calms the nervous system, the endocrine system and activates the release of healing hormones in the body as well as stimulating the brain to produce alpha waves –which are known to support visualization without emotion: in this state we can see ourselves performing past actions without feeling the emotions attached. Over time this judgment free practice allows us to view images of the past neutrally, and dissolves triggers that may have stimulated an individual turning to a drug of choice.

What You Can Do At Home:

1. Learn about yoga by enrolling at your local yoga studio or go online at [Free Online Yoga Classes](#) to join beginner and advanced yoga classes you can do at home for free.

7. STEP 7 Yoga Nidra – Setting New Intentions

Yoga Nidra is a guided meditation that has properties that are uniquely helpful in treating addiction. Yoga Nidra is the practice of lying still on one's back, with one's eyes closed whilst following the instructions of a meditation teacher. The practice involves the gradual shutting down of all the body's sensory channels except hearing, until ultimately the patient is brought to the state of consciousness we usually experience only in sleep – without being asleep. In this state, the body automatically activates rest and repair that is usually saved for sleep, whilst the patient is directed to envision a specific sequence of images with the desired effect that the mind is cleansed of all negative subconscious associations usually processed only in dreams; finally, in a state of deep relaxation, usually associated only with sleep, the patient sets new intentions for their life. This process of unconscious cleansing and intentional suggestion in a state of deep rest, relaxation has powerful and lasting effects on reconditioning the addicted person's mind in their everyday functioning.

What You Can Do At Home:

1. Learn about Yoga Nidra at www.irest.us or visit <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6097261061531748663> to listen to master Yogi, Manoj guide you through a Yoga Nidra exercise.

8. STEP 8: Meditation: An Every Day Medicine

Meditation as a practice has been shown to strengthen the pre frontal cortex in the brain – the part of the brain responsible for executive decision making and higher cognitive capacities. It has also been shown to relieve the stress networks of the brain (that activate stress) and to strengthen the GABA reward pathway of the brain.

In addition, the brain needs all this work: the executive function and decision making faculties are impaired, the stress network is hyperactive, and the reward pathways have been distorted by the drug of choice.

If there's one medicine that anyone facing addiction can take immediately at no cost: it's meditation

Practicing meditation daily whilst simultaneously undergoing the kind of Ayurvedic treatment described in the previous six steps is absolutely going to offer daily insight, clarity and awareness – on what the root cause of the stress is; on what is driving a person with addiction to their drug of choice; on what the costs of their addiction are to them and their loved ones; on what they need to do to stop their negative behavior.

This is all essential insight. When it emerges as a patient is undergoing a treatment program as complex and as multisensory as the Ayurvedic treatment for addiction, this information can be integrated in the processes of detoxification, purification, creating new habits and setting new intentions.

Meditation will continue to play a daily critical role in life beyond treatment: knowing early on when stressors are (re) emerging is a key component to staying addiction free. A daily meditation practice delivers this. Mandalas, Mantra and mindfulness techniques concentrate the mind, and create a level of awareness that can direct our behavior: knowing when to step back from things that we know will hurt us and our loved ones; knowing when we want to step forward and celebrate relationships and situations that nurture our wellness.

What You Can Do At Home:

1. Inquire for a meditation class with TM in your area at www.tm.org or else look up a Chopra Center Primordial Sound Meditation Instructor in your local area at <http://www.chopra.com>

Rajiv Parti, MD (aka Dr. Raj) is a world leading specialist in pain management with over 30 years practicing clinical experience. He was the Chief of Anesthesiology at Bakersfield Heart Hospital where he specialized in cardiac anesthesia for 15 years. Dr. Raj founded the Pain Management Institute of California, and under his direction it has served thousands of patients for acute and chronic pain relief. He now specializes in

promoting spiritual wellness and personal growth with various non-traditional healing modalities. His new book "The Soul of Wellness " is being released by Select Books in October 2012. www.drraj.com.

Chapter 3

Kundalini Yoga - The Yoga of Energy & Awareness

Introduction to Kundalini Yoga

What is Kundalini Yoga and How It Works

This article will provide a basic overview of what Kundalini Yoga is and how Kundalini Yoga works. At the core of Kundalini Yoga lies Kriyas and the best way to understand the methodology of Kundalini Yoga is to understand Kriyas and their function.

Understanding Kundalini Yoga Kriyas

Kriyas are a set of exercises done in a particular sequence to work on a specific theme. There are a wide range of Kriyas available, each refined over thousands of years to optimize their effectiveness. Kriyas utilize all the available Kundalini Yoga mechanisms to work their magic. They employ asanas (postures), movement, pranayama (breathing exercises), bandhas (body locks), mantras (sound vibrations), mudras (hand positions), laya yoga (yoga of rhythm and sound), mental focus and meditation to do their work.

Dynamic movement and asanas bring expanding and contracting pressure via multiple angles to various areas of the body, this is accompanied with powerful pranayamas, the combined effect of which is that the target regions are saturated with highly charged and oxygenated blood. This nutrient rich blood fills the capillaries forcing them to discharge toxins and other harmful elements, which are then eliminated, neutralized or expelled by the body. The health of the region thus improves and the nerves fire more completely, the glands and organs are invigorated and regain their natural voltage and secretion levels are returned to a condition of strength and vitality.

The key is the removal of blockages (granthis) that is taking place on many levels of the organism thus facilitating the flow of energy. There are Kriyas designed for working on almost every part of the human system (Immune, Glandular, Circulatory, Digestive, Nervous, Respiratory, Sexual, etc...), working on our various traits and characteristics (Awareness, Intuition, Willpower, Confidence, Compassion, Charisma, etc...) and also for healing many different types of ailments and diseases. Let's now see how this ties in with the Chakra (energy vortex) system.

Understanding Kundalini Yoga, Seven Chakra System

There are 7 primary chakras that lie all along the spine from the base to the crown of the head. Associated with each chakra are the primary nerve junctions and organs of that region. Furthermore, each chakra is responsible for certain traits and characteristics that make up our personality. When we strengthen and rejuvenate the nerves and organs in a particular region, we are in fact activating these energy centers that reside there and are thus working on ourselves not only at a physical level, but also at an emotional and mental level (by affecting our traits and characteristics). Practiced over time, the chakras become charged and come into balance with each other, bringing us into physical, emotional and mental well being. Again, it should be noted that the work being done is primarily about dissolving granthis (blockages) in these regions, which introduce disease and imbalance into the system by preventing the chakras from functioning at their optimum level. Finally, let us see how this relates to Kundalini Shakti.

Understanding Kundalini Shakti (Energy)

Kundalini is energy. It is the fundamental energy whose flow through the organism allows for all its systems to operate, at all levels of consciousness. It is the energy of awareness, it can be said that where your awareness is... that is where Kundalini is flowing, or, that

where Kundalini is flowing... is where your awareness is. To awaken Kundalini means to dissipate blockages in the gross and subtle systems in your being and allow for greater and greater flow of energy and awareness. As blockages are cleared trapped energy is released and pathways are cleared. Kundalini then is able to flow freely through those regions, healing, nourishing, rejuvenating and balancing them. The dissipating of blockages can also be thought of as the clearing away of the subconscious mind, the collection of unresolved emotional and physical disturbances. This is where the root of many of our attachments and fears. So overall Kundalini Yoga is a system by which one, through the process of dissolving the past, allows the infinite to shine through into the present.

How to Begin Your Kundalini Yoga Practice

You will find many [Kundalini Yoga Sets](#) on this website and I am constantly adding new ones. Please feel free to incorporate them into your sadhana (daily spiritual practice) as you see suitable. There are also [Free Online Kundalini Yoga and Meditation Classes](#) on Mastery of Meditation, please feel free to register and begin your yoga practice using them. For the initiates it is suggested that they read the [10 Guidelines For Kundalini Yoga Practice](#) to help prepare you for Yoga practice. Always remember that the True Guru is within and just a glance away from providing you the guidance you need.

Chapter 4

Kundalini Yoga Seven Chakra System Overview

(NOTE: Each Asana in this guide includes a statement of the chakras influenced in the pose.)

Kundalini Yoga Seven Chakra System Overview

What exactly are Chakras? How do they function? How can they be worked on? This article will look to answer these and other key questions regarding them, as well as give an overview of each of the Chakras that make up the Kundalini Seven Chakra System. Although, books can easily be written on this topic this document will concentrate on providing the most important aspects of this profound science.

Charkas are the centerpiece of the Yogic Energetic model of man. Chakra, which literally means wheel, is best thought of as a Multi-Dimensional Energy Vortex. By multi-dimensional I mean that a Chakra bridges across the many dimensions that make up a human being. According to Yoga there are four bodies that constitute a complete human being. These are the physical body, psychic or astral body, the mental body and finally the causal body. Chakras reside in the astral body, and serve as transformers to move energy between these various bodies.

The astral body can be thought of an aesthetic double of the physical body. Through it runs a vast complex of channels (nadis) that carry the energy of life (prana, chi or life-force). The quality and quantity of prana flowing through the nadis determines the health of the Chakras which reside there. The Chakras, as we mentioned are energy vortexes. They are opened and balanced by this flow of prana. The

Chakras lie along the spine from the base to the top of the head and there are seven main Chakras. Each of these Chakras governs the physical region where they are situated and also, are responsible for certain emotional and personality traits. As they are properly activated and energized by the correct flow of prana, the corresponding physical regions are rejuvenated and emotions of a higher quality are embraced.

The seven Chakras and their main areas of influence, both physical and emotional are given below. The format is Chakra Name: Location: Primary Physical Influence: Primary Emotional/Personality Influences.

1. Mooladhara (Root) Chakra:

Perineum: Excretory Systems: Physical Security & Fear

2. Swadhisthana (Sex) Chakra:

Base of the Spine: Sexual Systems: Self-Expression & Creativity

3. Manipura (Naval) Chakra:

Solar Plexus: Digestive Systems: Willpower & Anger

4. Anahata (Heart) Chakra:

Center of the Chest: Circulatory and Respiratory Systems: Love

5. Vishuddhi (Throat) Chakra:

Throat: Auditory and Speech Systems: Communication

6. Ajna (3rd Eye):

Center of head, directly in line with center of forehead: Eyes & Perception: Intuition

7. Sahasrara (Crown):

Top of Head: Brain and Nervous System: Bliss

Now that we know what Chakras are and what they do, let's see how we can work on them. The key to opening and balancing Chakras is by purifying the Nadis of blockages and increasing the flow of Prana. This is best done through the use of Yoga, Pranayama and meditations focusing on one or more of the Chakras experiencing blockage. Yoga, specifically Kundalini or Kriya Yoga, and Pranayama are essentially the science of Chakra Activation. They are designed to systematically dissolve the debris that collect and block the flow of energy through the nadis. When the flow increases, the Chakras are opened and, over time, become optimally balanced. This leads to higher levels of awareness and consciousness — which is to say that it leads to human beings achieving their highest potential.

Chapter 5

Essential Beginner's Guide to Physical Yoga Practice

Summary: *A beginner guide for those who are new to the world of yoga. This guide details the 3 most essential guidelines for doing yoga exercises, as well as lists the other important requirements you should know before starting your practice.*

Key Concepts: beginner yoga, yoga instruction, yoga guidelines, yoga practice, starting yoga, how to practice yoga, basic yoga, yoga tips

Although there is tons of information on Mastery of Meditation on yoga, I wanted to glean some of the most important information and compile it here for those of you who are beginners or new to yoga practice. This quick reference guide applies to all of you who are just starting your yoga practice and is independent of the type of yoga you are taking up.

Three Essential Guidelines of How to Practice Yoga:

Yoga is not just a series of exercises, poses or movements. As I have pointed out in the article [Comprehensive Guide to the World of Meditation](#), yoga is a type of body meditation. It is meditation in motion. For you to extract maximum benefit from your yoga practice, these three key elements are a must and never to be forgotten.

1. Do Yoga Exercises With Full Awareness:

Try to be as aware as possible of every posture and movement you are making during your practice. Check throughout your yoga session, as to where your mind is, and if it has wandered away, gently bring it back and focus again on the poses and the breathing. This is the

number one requirement of doing yoga, regardless of whether you are just a beginner yogi or a yoga master.

In addition, if certain feelings or energies awaken within you, bring your attention to them and observe them taking their course as you move through your practice.

2. Never Over Strain When Practicing Yoga:

As the requirement above, this guideline also applies to both beginner yoga practitioners as well as advanced yogis. When doing my yoga teacher's training course, what surprised me quite a bit, was how often these seasoned yogis were getting injured. Yoga is a journey, it is to be enjoyed and the sights and sounds taken in, it is not a competition.

If you are just beginning your practice, you need to give yourself time to gauge your capacity and limits. So start offering in the side of caution, rather than being over zealous. Learn to listen to your body. As you start to better understand your body and energy, you can start to explore your limits further and increase the challenge you place before yourself. Even as your yoga expertise develops, never forget this important rule of not overdoing it.

3. Yoga & Breathing Go Hand In Hand:

Don't forget to breathe! There are 2 aspects of breathing which every beginner yogi should be cognizant of:

First, yoga poses and exercises generally have some breathing pattern associated with them. This breath component of the yoga posture should not be ignored. The breathing plays a very important role in yoga and in order to get the most out of your yoga practice, employ the correct breathing along with the movement.

Second, pranayama, or the science of expanding and controlling prana (chi/life-force) is a key aspect of yoga and should be an integral part of your yoga practice. So, in addition to developing your physical yoga practice, be sure to also develop your expertise in pranayama. As a beginner, make sure you start off gently, as pranayama is a very powerful science and make steady progress over time.

A final word about yoga breathing, your breath can be a good anchor to help you retain your awareness when your mind is wondering. So it can go a long way in helping you with meeting the requirement of mindfulness, explained in guideline #1 above.

Other General Guidelines for Beginner Yoga Practitioners:

Having detailed the essential guidelines above, I will provide a bullet list below of some other general guidelines for the beginner yoga enthusiast to reference.

- Don't eat a big meal at least 2-3 hours before your yoga practice.
- Wear comfortable athletic or other loose clothing so that your movements are not restricted.
- Try to do your yoga practice early in the morning if possible.
- Make sure your yoga space is well ventilated.
- If you have medical conditions, select your yoga exercises accordingly.
- Drink plenty of water after practice to wash out toxins released by the yoga sets.

- It is fine to use yoga props to help you, such as blocks, blankets, cushions etc.
- It is fine to use music while practicing yoga, but not during silent meditation.
- If you find a great yoga teacher, awesome, if you don't, use your inner guru to guide you.
- It is recommended to start and end your yoga practice with a prayer to the Lord.

The most important requirement in order to benefit from yoga is to practice. So jump in and start your journey, everyone is welcome.

Chapter 6

10 Important Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice

10 Important Guidelines For Kundalini Yoga Practice

The following is a list of suggestions to guide you on how to practice Kundalini Yoga, Kundalini Yoga Kriyas (sets) and Yoga sessions in general. To understand more about what Kundalini Yoga is and how Kundalini Yoga works, please read the following article [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga](#).

1. Kundalini Yoga Attire:

1. Clothing should generally be loose and comfortable. Unlike other schools of Yoga, in Kundalini Yoga it is advisable to keep the shoulders and spine covered, so practicing without any covering on the upper body is not recommended. This has to do with the awakening, flow and distribution of Kundalini Shakti up and down the back, specially its movement via the 3 main psychic channels (ida, pingala and shushumna) that lie in and along the spinal cord.
2. Kundalini Yoga is generally practiced barefoot.
3. A blanket can be used to cover the body after doing Kundalini Yoga Kriyas, during the relaxation period. Most Kriyas are followed by a period of relaxation that is usually done in corpse pose (shav asana) and during this time the body temperature tends to drop, so a blanket (or shawl) can be used to stay warm and comfortable. You will fall

asleep at least once, no worries we have all done it. :-)

2. **Kundalini Yoga Diet:** This is a rather big topic, but here I will just provide some important highlights.

1. Try not to eat at least 2-3 hours before doing your Kundalini Yoga Kriyas and asanas. Given that Kundalini Yoga uses many different bandhas (body locks), pranayamas (breathing exercises), asanas and vigorous movement, you could be quite uncomfortable if your stomach is still full. Use a nutrient bar or other healthy snack if you feel you need some energy prior to your yoga set.
2. Although Yoga in general recommends a Sattvic diet (foods that promote calmness and clarity), and not Rajasic foods (energetic foods that promote activity) or Tamasic foods (foods that promote heaviness and dull the mind), due to the physical, energetic nature of Kundalini Yoga, including some Rajasic foods in your diet is not a significant issue. Still it is recommended that the bulk of your diet be Sattvic. Sattvic foods are generally fresh and sweet such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, honey etc. Rajasic foods are generally spicy and stimulating, such as onions, garlic, eggs, fish, tea etc. Tamasic foods are fatty foods, stale food, meat, etc.
3. Kundalini Yoga Kriyas are designed to force the organs, tissues, nerves and vessels to expel buried toxins out into the elimination systems of the body. So after any Kriyas or tough yoga set, one should drink plenty of water to help cleanse the body of the toxins and waste that have been released.

3. Kundalini Yoga Breathing:

1. Kundalini Yoga significantly relies on the Science of Pranayama (breathing exercises) to work its magic. Each exercise and asana is accompanied by a specific pranayama. Unless it is specifically specified all pranayama should be done through the nose.
2. Although Jal Neti (washing the nostrils with saline water) is recommended for cleaning the nasal passageways to help maximize the benefits of the pranayamas, it is advisable as a minimum to keep a box of tissues handy.

4. Kundalini Yoga Safety:

1. Some Kundalini Yoga Kriyas can be quite challenging and it is recommended to always do warm-ups first before doing these tough sets and asanas. There are several good easy kriyas and sets, which work very well as warm-ups to the tough kriyas. It is especially important to do spinal warm-ups as charging the cerebrospinal fluid within the spinal cord and brain assists in the flow of awakened Kundalini Shakti.
2. This item can't be emphasized enough. Don't overdo it. Try to walk the middle ground between fanaticism and laziness. This goes for both, your overall practice and also for each kriya and asana you do. In other words, each exercise you do should not be too easy and not be too hard, and your overall sadhana (spiritual practice) should be equally balanced, between being ridiculously ambitious or excessively easy. With regard to your sadhana try to establish a steady, long-term daily practice, rather than doing 10 hours a day for 2 weeks and then nothing after

that.

3. This is probably the most important guideline. Use common sense with regard to injuries. Use modifications that are provided for the difficult asanas and exercises and back off if you feel you are risking injury. Also, feel free to increase the relaxation time between exercises or reduce the time suggested for doing a particular exercise to suit your pace. As my yoga teacher Ravi Singh used to say, Kundalini Yoga is all about you and you - it is not a competition - so listen to your body and let your inner voice guide and direct you.
4. The Kundalini Yoga teachings and methodology provided here have been perfected over the centuries to not only optimize the benefits of the Kriyas, but, also to reduce any dangers and risks associated with awakening Kundalini Shakti. The general idea is not to activate the chakras by excessively using the Beej Mantas (seed sounds) associated with each chakra or other direct methods; the idea, instead, is simply to prepare the system physically, emotionally and mentally for greater and greater flow of Kundalini Shakti. The approach is to trust the Universe to awaken this energy in accordance with the level of preparation. This approach helps avoid many of the difficulties involved with the premature awakening of Kundalini that one sometimes comes across in literature.

5. Kundalini Yoga Teachings:

1. It is suggested to initially learn Kundalini Yoga from a teacher who can ensure that the knowledge is accurately transferred. If possible you should at least try to attend a few live yoga classes so that you can get a feel for the kriyas, asanas, and pranayamas. But keep in mind that

the real Guru is within and is always available to guide you if asked.

2. There is also some good literature and websites available, which provide guidance and resources for practicing Kundalini yoga. You can look for books written by [Swami Satyananda Saraswati](#) and [Ravi Singh](#) or visit their websites for more information. Of course you can also go to the [Kundalini Yoga Section](#) or the general [Yoga Section](#) of this website for plenty of good stuff too: -D.

6. When to Practice Kundalini Yoga: In general Kundalini Yoga should be practiced in the early morning hours. But if you can't do your sadhana at that time, it is fine to practice at other times of the day as well. Some Kriyas, such as those that help you sleep, etc. of course need to be practiced at the designated times. Below are some reasons to motivate you to practice in the early morning hours. You can also read [The Secret on How to Become an Early Riser](#) if this is something you want to accomplish.

1. Early morning is called brahmamuhurta in Sanskrit. It literally means "The Divine Time." This is the time of the day when the spiritual energy on our lovely planet is at its highest.
2. The air at this time is fresh and contains the greatest amount of prana (cosmic life force).
3. The mind is also fresh and unburdened with the worries of everyday life. This will help in the practice of concentration and meditation.

4. This is the time of day when you are least likely to be distracted by the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

5. The stomach is empty, which is necessary before practicing many of the Yoga asanas and pranayamas.

7. **Where to Practice Kundalini Yoga:** It is important for the place where you practice Kundalini Yoga to be neat, spacious and clean, but more importantly it should be well ventilated. You can also use a fan to keep the air fresh, but make sure it is not pointed directly at you. Practicing outdoors is fine as well, although in direct sunlight it may become too warm due to the energetic pranayamas and exercises.

8. **Tools for Kundalini Yoga Practice:**

1. It is fine to use inspirational music when doing the Kundalini Yoga kriyas and sets, but music in general should not be used when doing the meditations, unless it is specified otherwise.

2. You can use a firm cushion, yoga block or folded blanket to sit on if it helps take the pressure off your knees, hips and back. You may also use a zafu, smile cushion and zabuton to practice the meditations or kriyas if you like. I have ordered my zafus and zabutons from here and have been very happy with them zafu.net.

3. It is recommended for obvious reasons to make sure you are not practicing on a slippery surface. A yoga mat or appropriate yoga rug should be used.

4. To help you stretch and hold certain asanas it is fine to use a yoga blocks or yoga straps.

5. Yoga neck pillows or folded blankets are fine to use to support your neck or lower back (by placing under your knees) during relaxation periods while in shav asana and similar asana.

9. Medical Conditions and Kundalini Yoga Practice:

1. Kundalini Yoga should never be practiced under the influence of alcohol or drugs. You are about to awaken the most potent force within yourself, trust me you wont need to get a high of anything else once you start this journey.
2. If you are taking prescription medication, or are under medical supervision you should check with your health care provider before starting a Kundalini Yoga Program.
3. If you are pregnant you should check with your health care provider before proceeding. There are Kundalini Yoga kriyas specifically designed for Pre-natal and Post-natal periods.

10. **Kundalini Yoga Attitude:** Be committed and trust in the Universal Forces to guide, nourish and deliver you. Kundalini Yoga is a very powerful science and you will find it an invaluable asset in helping you reach and surpass your maximum potential.

Chapter 7

Beginner's Guide to Yoga Breathing Exercises (Pranayama)

How to Practice Yoga Pranayama

The vast benefits of yoga pranayama, or yoga breathing exercises, are now starting to be discovered by mainstream society. It is inevitable; to those of us familiar with this profound science, that pranayama will gain equal, if not greater, popularity than the physical yoga exercises (Hatha Yoga Asanas) have done so far. This is because pranayama is absolutely something everyone can practice, regardless of age or physical prowess. If you can breathe, you can do pranayama.

The beauty with yoga breathing is that simple techniques can bestow terrific benefits and that learning and practicing these techniques is something well within reach of us all. Whether you are a beginner or advanced yogi, pranayama is something you will find to be a powerful tool to help you with your spiritual evolution. That being said, there are certain guidelines and recommendations that you should follow with regard to pranayama practice, and in this article I would like to provide those to you.

If you are an advanced yogi, from the point of view of Hatha yoga practice, and you have not done much pranayama, then you should approach this science with the same respect as a beginner would. This is because prana, or life-force, is the vast energy of atoms, and the body's capacity to handle such energy should be built up gently and systematically over time. Rushing pranayama practice can create imbalances in the systems and other problems that could easily have been avoided if an intelligent approach had been embraced.

Beginner's Guide to Yoga Pranayama Practice

1. **Clothing:**

Clothing should be loose, especially around the abdomen. This will ensure that the natural movement of the diaphragm is not impeded when doing the breathing exercises.

2. **Diet:**

You should not eat a heavy meal the 2-3 hours before practicing pranayama. The stomach should be empty. It is fine to sip some water during the practice to stay hydrated, especially when performing heat generating vigorous exercise. If your diet can consist of light, fresh food that will help the cleansing process as well.

3. **Time:**

Dawn is a terrific time to practice yoga and meditation, but this is more so for pranayama practice. This is because the early morning air is fresh and at this time the air contains the most amount of prana. Practicing at this time, will bestow benefits faster. Of course, if this is not feasible, no worries, practice when you can. Here is an article on [How to Help You Become an Early Riser](#).

4. **Posture:**

Always sit with your back as straight if possible. In addition, keep the chin slightly tucked in so that the back of the neck is aligned with the spine. This will help the flow of energy up and down the spine and up into the brain region. In addition, this

will prevent you from getting dizzy during vigorous exercises.

5. Illness:

Whether you are a beginner or an advanced practitioner, do not practice any advanced pranayamas while you are unwell. Do the beginner versions of the breathing exercises or choose easy pranayamas to do instead. It is also fine to stop entirely until you have recovered fully.

6. Effort:

Again, regardless of if you are a beginner or advanced yogi you should never strain when practicing yoga. This is especially true when doing the breathing exercises. As indicated above, pranayama, which means the expansion and control of prana, deals with the nuclear energy of atoms and progress should be made gently and systematically.

This is even more applicable for any pranayama that requires you to hold your breath in or out for prolonged periods of time. If at all you feel uncomfortable while practicing a pranayama, stop, take a break and restart again when you feel ready.

7. Cautions:

Don't practice any heat generating pranayamas while sitting directly under the hot sun. This can aggravate the heat in the system (pitta). Similarly, choose pranayamas according to conditions and state of your health. In other words, don't practice [Sheetali Pranayama](#) if you are suffering from a cold or chest congestion, etc.

8. Location:

Try to practice in a well-ventilated room with plenty of fresh air.

Summary

Yoga Pranayama is perhaps the best part of yoga. All the various types of yoga have contributed to this profound science and the following 2 e-books should give you plenty of techniques to incorporate into your daily practice: [Free Online Yoga Pranayamas E-Book](#) and [Free Online Yoga Breathing Exercises Videos](#).

If you are just beginning your yoga practice, definitely incorporate pranayama into it, if you are an adept yogi and have not indulged in pranayama, then it's overdue that you take advantage of this warehouse of profound wisdom.

Chapter 8

How to Meditate

Learn to Meditate

Meditation Instructions with Illustrations

Learning how to meditate is the most important part of being a human being. In fact, to uncover and embrace all that you are, meditation is the key. Meditation reveals to you the Truth of your infinite, divine nature, and there are absolutely no material equivalents to these discoveries. Along the way to Self-Realization, many other priceless benefits are also bestowed by meditation practice, and I have detailed those in the following article to help motivate you even further: [Top 10 Benefits of Meditation](#). So given how important meditation is, in this article, I would like to teach you step by step how to learn and practice this great art.

Preparation for Meditation:

One of the most important aspects of learning how to meditate and reaping the rewards of this spiritual science is to develop a consistent, daily practice. Without such a practice, you are unlikely to master this subtle art. I have previously discussed some tips on how to accomplish this in a few articles such as, [Tips and Tools for Daily Meditation Practice](#) and [How Much Time Should You Meditate for Daily](#), and I would like to summarize all that wisdom for you here today. So below are guidelines of what you need to set-up in order to maximize your chances of learning and succeeding in meditation.

1. Meditation Time:

To really increase the chances of meditation becoming an integral part of your life, set a particular time of day when you plan to meditate.

Preferably this should be early in the morning if possible (See: [How to Become an Early Riser](#)), but if not, then some other time of day when you can do your meditation consistently is also fine. For beginner's, the optimum configuration is 2 times per day, 20 minutes each session, once in the morning, once in the evening. This configuration has been proven time and again to be the best for those just learning to meditate.

2. Meditation Space:

Not far behind Meditation Time, is Meditation Space, if you want to learn meditation and establish a long-term, consistent practice. Having a space put aside for meditation, will make it much easier to do your daily meditation, and also help induce the right state of mind for meditation. The space should be inspiring, clean and simple, so that once you enter it, your mind reflects the outer order, thus making it easier to concentrate and penetrate beyond the superficial levels of consciousness.

3. Meditation Tools:

Don't underestimate the importance of simple meditation tools to help you learn and master this art. A good meditation cushion, or Zafu, will help you with your posture and relieve you of back pain. Proper meditation attire will keep your blood circulating and prevent your legs from falling asleep. A stopwatch will help you stay focused during meditation, as it will relieve the need to constantly check the time. Some incense, or a candle, will help calm the mind and inspire your spiritual nature. So put these items in place, as they will not just inspire, but also help prevent some of the common pitfalls that derail an early meditation practice. The Tips & Tools article above, gives you more information on this.

You can purchase such items at your favorite yoga and meditation supplies store, or by visiting one of my partners ([Yoga Accessories](#)).

Meditation Posture:

Once you have established your place and time. The next step is actually getting down to meditating. Although you can meditate sitting up straight on a chair or lying flat on your back, the traditional postures of meditation are sitting cross-legged with certain mudras (hand positions in place). These postures are the best for meditating and if you are learning how to meditate, I strongly suggest trying one of these sitting postures first.

Below I am going to show you three postures that are excellent for meditation. One is a basic posture, the second is a typical Hindu meditation posture, and the third is a typical Buddhist meditation posture.

How to Meditate Illustrations:



Basic Meditation Posture



Hindu Meditation Mudra - Gyan Mudra



Hindu Meditation Posture



Buddhist Meditation Mudra - Cosmic Mudra



Buddhist Meditation Posture

How to Sit for Meditation:

For all the postures above, the following is common.

1. Sit up nice and tall, keeping your spine straight.
2. Pull your chin back slightly, like a soldier at attention, to align the back of the neck with the spine.
3. If possible sit in Burmese Style (or Full Lotus if you can). In Burmese Style fold your left leg in, and then place your right leg in front of it. The knees are touching the floor as shown above. This forms a very strong base, and also with the legs not on top of each other, prevents common leg issues, when meditating for longer periods of time.
4. For the hand position, there are 3 variations I have given above. Here are the details.
 - **Drona Mudra:** In this position (First Illustration), simply place your hands on your knees as shown.
 - **Gyan Mudra:** This is typically used in the Hindu/Sikh traditions, where your thumb tips and index finger are meeting and the other three fingers are extended as shown. This closes a particular subtle energy circuit in the body, and helps the mind go inward for meditation.
 - **Cosmic Mudra:** Place your right hand on your lap, and then gently place the left over it and have the thumb tips gently touching as I have demonstrated above. This is another excellent mudra for inducing a meditative state of mind. It is used in Buddhist meditation, especially Zen.

How to Meditate:

Now that you have got yourself into your meditative space and taken the right meditation posture, it is time to actually start meditating 😊. To do this, the final step is to choose what type of meditation you are going to practice. I have given a wide range of meditations in the [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques E-book](#) and I have also broken down meditations with regard to benefits, in the article [Meditation Techniques | the Ultimate Guide](#), but for those who are just learning to meditate I would suggest starting with Breath Meditation first. This is a simple technique with profound benefits. It is the meditation of Lord Buddha.

I have given details of this meditation in the article [Zen Meditation Technique](#), but I will offer them here as well.

- Once you take your posture, you can either close your eyes, or as it is in traditional Zen practice, keep them open with an unfocused gaze on the floor in front of you. Also, once you take your posture you should remain absolutely still, as if frozen in time.
- Next bring your awareness to your breathing and begin to count your breaths from 1 to 10, with each inhalation and exhalation incrementing the count. Once you get to 10, come back to 1 and start over. So you would do 5 complete breaths to get from 1 to 10.
- If your mind wanders during this time, simply see your thought, let it go and return to your count.
- If you get lost in your thinking, then again, simply see the thoughts that carried you away, let them go and return to 1, and start over.

Above are the basic instructions for breath meditation practice. This is a great way for you to learn how to meditate. The simple act of watching your breath in this way, will teach you great concentration, expand your awareness and give you mastery over your mind and body. As your meditation practice deepens, you can expand your awareness to be mindful of not just your breath, but of any sensations that arise in your body, any feeling or emotions that come up, and finally develop the art of watching and comprehending your thoughts from moment to moment. Perceiving your thinking mind and having direct insight into the false nature of duality and thoughts is the ultimate goal of meditation. For this advanced version of Insight Meditation, see the article [Silent Mind Meditation Technique](#).

How to Meditate Summary:

One of the most important goals of this website, is to help you master the art of meditation. As I mentioned at the very beginning, this is where the real treasures of life are found. Once you learn how to meditate, you will learn about your true infinite nature and see the perfection that is inherent in every moment of your life.

One final resource I would like to mention to help you learn to meditate if you are just getting started is the free online meditation class offered here on [Mastery of Meditation and Yoga](#). Below is the link to this class... enjoy!

[Learn How to Meditate | Beginner's Meditation Class](#)

Research on the Many Health Benefits of Meditation

Research on Meditation and Health

The scientific support for the health benefits of meditation is growing on a daily basis, as more and more research is starting to validate what the spiritual community has already known for centuries. Today we will explore this topic further. There are [many different meditation techniques](#) and although, all these are helpful in some degree from a health perspective, in this series, I will compile for you those techniques that are the best for health and healing.

This series will be in 2 parts. In part 1, I will highlight the health benefits of meditation as demonstrated by recent scientific research, while in part 2 we will provide you with the healing meditations themselves. Below are these benefits, knowing which I feel will be very inspiring to you for beginning a personal meditation practice.

Scientific Research Indicating Health Benefits of Meditation:

1. Reduce Anxiety & Stress:

Research has shown that meditation activates the left pre-frontal cortex, while diminishing activity in the right pre-frontal cortex of the brain. This shift is in line with reduced stress and anxiety, as the left frontal cortex is associated with calmness, peace, happiness and other positive feelings. This shift in brain activity also indicates meditation as a solution for depression.

For more details on using meditation and yoga to reduce stress, anxiety and depression, read [Best Treatments for Stress and Anxiety Disorder](#).

2. Reduce Blood Pressure:

Meditation has been shown to significantly reduce blood pressure, while at the same time improving circulation and heart health. Blood flow was shown to increase almost 200%, especially in the frontal cortex. Meditation has also been shown to reduce cholesterol, but most significant to heart health is the stress reducing power of meditation, as undoubtedly stress is the number one enemy of good heart health.

3. Immune Health:

Research has shown, meditators to be significantly healthier than those who don't. 50% fewer doctor's visits, 55% fewer tumors and significantly reduced cases of infectious diseases as well.

4. Chronic Pain:

Meditation has been shown to be very effective in helping with pain management. Research has shown a 50% reduction in perceived pain when treated using meditation.

5. Insomnia:

One of the areas where meditation has been extremely effective is in helping those suffering from insomnia. When trained in meditation, there was a 75% improvement in those suffering from this condition.

6. Intelligence, Awareness, Concentration and Performance:

Thickening of the brain as well as improved performance, concentration and intelligence has been attributed to meditation practice. These improvements were found to be valid with young adults as well ([Amazing Benefits of Meditation for Young People](#)).

Another article previously published detailing how good meditation is for the brain is [Brain Benefits of Meditation](#).

7. Aging:

Meditation has been shown time and again to slow down the aging process, with those who meditate registering much younger effective ages than their chronological age.

8. Treating Habits and Addictions:

Meditation has been shown as an effective treatment for addictions and detrimental habits. There are also yoga and breathing techniques which are valuable for this, and you can find those in the article [Yoga to Stop Smoking and Breaking Addictions](#).

Summary of Health Benefits of Meditation:

Of course, the benefits of meditations are much more far-reaching than just good health, and you can read about all these benefits in the article, [Top 10 Profound Benefits of Meditation](#). The above list though should certainly be more than enough to motivate you to start practicing meditation as a tool to maintain good health and heal yourself of diseases.

Chapter 9

Simple Yogic Breathing

Yoga Breathing

I was just updating the ongoing [Free Online Yoga Breathing Exercises E-book](#), with the recent Seetkari Yoga Pranayama article, when I realized I had not yet published the most fundamental and basic Yoga Breathing Technique - The Yogic Breath or Simple Yoga Breathing 😊. The online pranayama (yoga breathing exercises) e-book has some excellent techniques of course, such as [Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama](#), [Kundalini Yoga Breath of Fire](#), [Alternate Nostril Yoga Breathing](#), but it does not have the Simple Yogic Breath, which is a must. So today I am going to detail this breathing technique, which is capable of transforming your entire physical, mental and emotional state.

Yogic Breathing is not really a technique, as really it should be the way you breathe all the time if possible. So learning and practicing this technique will help you regain your natural breathing pattern and along with it the many associated benefits. Below I explain this technique in detail and take you step by step in how to practice it. Please also read the [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Breathing Exercises](#) to familiarize you with general guidelines on how to practice yoga pranayama.

Benefits of Yogic Breathing:

Physical:

- Improves lung capacity and helps treat all respiratory ailments such as asthma, etc.

- Improves the intake of Prana (life-force) to help the entire system rejuvenate and regenerate.
- Helps to detoxify the body and increases oxygen supply to the blood stream.
- Helps the cardiovascular, nervous and immune systems.
- Helps the mind, body and senses come into rhythm and better coordinate function.

Mental and Emotional:

- Slows down the thinking process and calms the mind.
- Helps dissolve stress.
- Reduces anger and irritation.
- Promotes a sense of peace and tranquility.
- Improves awareness and mental clarity.
- Helps you evolve spiritually.

Cautions for Yogic Breathing:

There are not many cautions for practicing Simple Yogic Breathing, just give yourself some time in developing the right rhythm and pace as it could take time to break old habits of shallow, rapid and wrong breathing.

Step-by-step Instruction on How to Do Simple Yoga Breathing Technique:

To practice Yogic Breathing sit up in a comfortable position, you can sit cross-legged or on a chair if needed. It is also excellent to practice on your back in Corpse Pose (see [Best Relaxation Yoga Technique - Corpse Pose](#)).

There are 2 distinct parts to Yogic Breathing and I will explain each of those below as well.

- If you are sitting, elongate your spine upwards place your hands on your knees and relax.
- Next close your eyes and bring your attention to your breath.
- First you should begin with Diaphragmatic Breathing (which means to breathe into the abdomen). Also called Abdominal Breathing.
- To do this, as you inhale allow your diaphragm to move down and stomach move out (expand). Try to only use your abdomen, not allowing the chest to rise (or fall) as best you can. On the exhalation, let the diaphragm move up and the stomach move in towards the spine. So only your stomach region is rising and falling on inhalation and exhalation. Continue on for 2 minutes, just using your stomach/diaphragm to breathe.
- Now try Thoracic Breathing, which is done by just using the Chest region.
- To do this, as you inhale only allow your chest to expand. At the end of the inhalation make a small effort such that the shoulders rise slightly to complete the inhalation. On the exhalation let the shoulders drop and the chest deflate. Begin filling the chest

from the bottom up on the inhalation and emptying it from the top down on the exhalation. Again, try not to let the abdomen rise and fall while doing this phase. Continue for 2 minutes.

- Now combine both Abdominal Breathing and Thoracic Breathing and you will have Yogic Breathing 😊. To do this on inhalation let the air first fill your abdominal region and then move upwards into your chest region and finally filling out your upper chest with the slight rise of the shoulders. Then on the exhalation, let the chest empty and then your abdomen, finally pulling the stomach in towards the spine to fully expel all the air. Continue on for 5 to 10 minutes and see how wonderful you feel.
- There is another variation to Yogic Breathing, which is also very good and one I prefer, and that is the simultaneous expansion (rise) of the abdomen and chest on inhalation and simultaneous contraction (fall) of both regions on exhalation. So as you inhale let the diaphragm push down and stomach expand out, while at the same time let the chest and shoulder rise. Then allow them to fall and contract on the exhalation. There is no gap between exhalation and inhalation.
- As you practice, the goal is for the whole process to become smooth and effortless. Also, for the whole process to happen not in segments but as an integrated whole. Like a gentle wave rising and falling.
- Going forward when I refer to Yogic Breathing I will refer to this description I have given above. I especially suggest you try the simultaneous rise and fall method I described above and I am sure you will find that most rewarding.

Simple Yogic Breath Tips and Tricks:

Here are some nice tips to help you master this all important breathing technique.

- If you are having problems with Yogic Breathing, I suggest lying in front of a mirror and placing 2 heavy books on top of you. One on your abdomen and one on your chest. Then you should first practice Abdominal Breathing and just concentrate of having the book on the stomach rise and fall, after which you should just do Thoracic Breathing and have the book on the chest rise and fall.
- After that I suggest trying either of the 2 ways I have described Yogic Breathing. Having both stomach and chest rise and fall, or having them flow sequentially as I have described above.
- Yogic breathing is excellent to practice in Corpse Pose to achieve deep relaxation. If you are suffering from stress or anxiety I strongly suggest 11 minutes of this practice everyday. It has been known to significantly help with hypertension and high blood pressure.
- In time, a good rhythm to shoot for is 12 complete breath cycles per minute, with inhalation being slightly longer than the exhalation for each cycle.
- Try to do Yogic Breathing without making a sound. This will help make the breath very fine and silky, which in turn will bring great calm and peace to the mind, body and emotions.

Yogic Breathing can be done anytime and should certainly become a key part of your practice and life. It will also be incorporated into some of the new [free yoga and meditation classes](#) that we run here on the [Mastery of Meditation and Yoga](#) website.

CHAPTER 10:

Designing Your Own Yogic Treatment Program for Health & Healing

This guide has been designed so that the user can draw from it to create their own individualized personal healing program. Each treatment program should incorporate the following elements (in order):

- 1) Meditation Method – The meditation method chosen must assist the body to heal. This can be via a meditation specifically designed to treat an area of the body, or, via a meditation designed to restore calm and balance.
- 2) Pranayama – One or more Pranayamas may be used within the healing program.
- 3) Asanas – Specific asanas are chosen to assist the healing process for the symptoms identified.
- 4) Mudras and Bandhas – These may be used along with meditation, pranayama and asana practice and further support the healing sought in the practice.
- 5) Other – Diet, Sleep patterns, dosha balance, advanced Ayurvedic treatments, etc all have an influence on our physical and emotional states and should be looked at as part of our healing program.

Sample Healing Program Development:

The following will help serve to illustrate how a healing program is conceptualized and put into action. For the purpose of this example, let's pretend we are assisting a young 40-something yogi named "Bobbie" to put together a healing program for chronic stomach upset, nausea and abdominal cramping.

Bobbie has gone to the general practitioner (GP) and received the green light to develop a yoga program for her symptoms. The doctor had examined Bobbie and ran several medical tests ruling out the existence of serious diseases such as cancer, ulcers, etc. The doctor is at a loss for the root cause of the symptoms and has told Bobbie that the only remedy they have at their disposal in this situation are prescription drugs designed to help protect the stomach lining and hopefully alleviate the nausea and cramping.

Bobbie decides to begin taking the prescription drugs and to keep seeing her GP with regular follow-ups. However, she also wants our help to use yoga to heal in the hope that the need for drugs may be short-term.

Here's what Bobbie tells us at the start of program development:

- 1) Nausea is common, especially after meals.
- 2) Abdominal cramps and occasional diarrhea accompany the nausea but occasionally happen at other times without apparent cause.
- 3) Occasional acid reflux.
- 4) Sleep isn't good and ranges from 4 to 6 hours per night on average. Bobbie feels stressed.
- 5) Bobbie's describes her thinking process to us as often racing and with a lack of focus.

What we can see from Bobbie's symptoms is that she appears to have trouble digesting meals and her sleep pattern is upset possibly due to stress and an overactive mind. Further, the stress may be being carried within the abdominal area as tension further exacerbating Bobbie's symptoms.

After a review of the "Healing Guide Chart" at the beginning of this guide, we see the following are recommended for general symptoms such as Bobbie's:

For Acid Reflux:

- Pranayamas: Sheetalī or Seetkari
- Asanas: None specific to Acid Reflux however asanas that may force abdominal fluids up from the stomach **must** be avoided (e.g. Downward Facing Dog).
- Bandhas & Mudras: Buddhi Mudra
- Meditations: No specific meditation recommendations for Acid Reflux however calming and soothing meditations will help calm the body.

For Digestive Issues:

- Pranayamas: Breath of Fire, Kapalbhāti, Sheetalī, Sodarshan, Bhastrīka.
- Asanas: Back Stretching Pose, Cat/Cow, Bridge, Stomach Grind, Spine Flex, Camel, Bow, Locust, Modified Wheel, Boat, Wheel, Plow, Kundalīni Lotus, Jaanu Sirsasana, Cobra, Downward Facing Dog.
- Meditations: No specific meditation recommendations for digestion. The cause of poor digestion can be the result of a lack of, or over-abundance of, digestive fire within the body. As Bobbie also suffers from Stress, Acid Reflux and Insomnia from an over-active mind, her digestive issues are very likely the result of an excess of digestive fire. Therefore, calming and soothing meditations should be tried first.
- Bandhas/Mudras: Maha Bandha, Buddhi Mudra

For Bobbie's Insomnia:

- Pranayamas: Sheetalī, Ujjayī, Seetkari
- Asanas: Corpse, Jaanu Sirsasana
- Meditations: All methods which calm the mind
- Bandhas/Mudras: None specific

Putting it All Together into a Program:

Considering the three areas that require attention in Bobbie, and how each of these areas interacts with the other, the following is a good starter Yoga program to begin working on her symptoms:

- Meditation – Zazen with Cosmic Mudra. Zazen will help to calm the mind and aid in sleeping. Further, this meditation technique will help to reduce the tension and stress in Bobbie which is likely contributing to her Acid Reflux and Digestive Issues.
- Pranayama & Mudras – Sheetalī, Seetkari & Ujjayī pranayamas may all be used interchangeably within this program. More forceful pranayamas are avoided for now as a lack of digestive fire does not appear to be a problem for Bobbie. Forceful Pranayamas such as Breath of Fire and Bhastrika would increase digestive fire. Finally, Buddhi Mudra should be incorporated with sitting pranayama practice as appropriate.
- Asanas: Pooran Titali (Butterfly), Back Stretching Pose, Stomach Grind, Cat/Cow, Spine Flex, Cobra, Bow, Camel, Jaanu Sirsasana, and, Corpse Pose should all be used to start treating Bobbie. Most of these poses massage the internal

organs of the abdominal area and are gentle to moderate in intensity. Others promote calm and combat insomnia. Our goal is to treat Bobbie's symptoms gradually and gently while not over stimulating the body and adding to her feelings of stress, insomnia and acid reflux.

- Bandha – Maha Bandha should be incorporated at the end of the asana practice before Corpse pose. If desired, Maha Bandha may be performed one or more times between the asanas to increase healing effects. The benefits of Maha Bandha are numerous and include stress relief and digestive system health improvement.

As you can see, there is a certain depth of self-analysis needed to be able to understand your specific health situation and select the best Yoga practice to meet your health needs. In this example, there were a number of items available from the health chart that were not necessarily appropriate for Bobbie's needs at this time (e.g. the more forceful pranayamas). So, it is absolutely necessary that when using this guide you read and understand the physical effects of each available treatment option before using it in your healing practice.

Finally, listen to your body and chart your progress. Don't be afraid to make changes to your program as the yoga begins to work and your body's health changes over time.

Chapter 11: The Asanas - Postures for Health & Well Being

Corpse Pose for Deep Relaxation

You may have noticed the emphasis I place on doing a period of relaxation after any set of yoga exercises or difficult Kundalini Yoga techniques. The importance of this relaxation phase should not be underestimated. During this time, the body and mind get a chance to assimilate the energy and changes that are produced by the yoga exercises, and this opportunity is essential for making the most of the work you have just put in. There are quite a few relaxation techniques available, but without a doubt the very best relaxation exercise is Yoga Corpse Pose.

Relaxation, of course, has many more benefits than just providing the space for energy assimilation after yoga exercises, and so it is certainly a very valuable skill to own and master for healthy and peaceful living. To that end, Corpse Pose is great to practice if you are going through a stressful and tense time in your life, are fighting any health issues or if you are simply interested in cultivating a relaxed and peaceful mind and body.

Despite how simple an exercise Corpse Pose might seem and despite thinking that relaxation is a natural state, you will be surprised how difficult this actually can be for people to do. The habit of endless thinking, worrying, stressing, planning, etc, has become hard to shake off in today's hectic world, thus making the simple and natural state of relaxation hard to access. Perhaps even enlightenment is easier today to achieve than relaxation 😊. This is all the more reason that we need to consciously practice relaxation and stress relief, so that we can enjoy the bountiful benefits this blessed state bestows upon us.

For successful relaxation, whether it is via the practice of Corpse Pose or some other technique, breath is going to always be a key component. Breath can be used to not only signal the mind and body that it's relaxation time, but it can also be used as a mechanism in relaxation visualization techniques to help promote this state.

Furthermore, by the simple use of the breath, stress relief can be achieved anytime, even when lying on your back and playing dead is not quite appropriate 😊. So in the practice section below, be sure to pay particular attention to this aspect.

In the practice section below you will also find several variation of how to take full advantage of Corpse Pose to not just relax, but also to do conscious stress relief and to set the optimum state for affirmations and visualizations.

Corpse Pose is included in our ongoing [Kundalini Yoga Exercises E-book](#) and it will also be part of our [Hatha Yoga Poses E-book](#), as this essential technique is common to all schools of yoga. For another excellent relaxation technique you can read the article on the [Meditation Technique for Relaxation & Stress Relief](#).

Benefits of Corpse Pose Relaxation Technique:

- Allows surrender to Infinity so it can speak to us.
- Allows surrender to the Universe so she can heal and rejuvenate us.
- Allows surrender to the body and indicates trust in its ability to heal itself. Creates a highly conducive state for self-healing to take place.

- Helps the mind and body deeply relax and promotes stress relief.
- Allows the mind and body to assimilate the gains from previously done yoga exercises.
- Creates a state optimum for visualization techniques to be implemented thus, helping one manifest one's desires and intentions.
- Allows one to be free from worry and anxiety, thus promoting a peaceful and serene mind and body.
- Helps one combat insomnia and sleep peacefully.

Corpse Pose Relaxation Technique Basic Practice Details:

- Lie on your back and close your eyes.
- Have your legs shoulder width apart and allow the feet to fall away naturally. Have your arms outstretched and along the sides of your body, about 12 inches away. Have your palms facing up and allow the finger curled naturally. If necessary use a rolled blanket or small pillow under your knees to take pressure off your lower back. You can also use a light blanket to stay warm as the body will cool down when relaxed.
- Now start to take a deep breath, allowing it to fill your abdomen first and then letting the air fill your chest. Without pausing exhale, allowing the air to empty your chest first and then your abdomen. Your diaphragm should push down and out, expanding your stomach as you inhale, and then up and pulling in your stomach as you exhale. Take 5 such deep long breaths to help melt away tension and stress.

- After the 5 long deep breaths, simply let go of everything and allow yourself to sink deeper and deeper into the floor and deeper and deeper into nothingness.
- Let go of all your worries, anxieties, problems, tensions, goals and plans. Allow the entire body, mind and breath to relax. Just relax completely and surrender to Infinity. Allow Infinity to do what is necessary with you. Feel peaceful and quiet, and with every breath allow yourself to let go even more and relax even more deeply.
- Continue on for the duration of the relaxation period. Time is open for this exercise.

Corpse Pose for Conscious Stress Relief & Relaxation:

- In this variation you can use Corpse Pose to consciously relax and let go of tension in various parts of the body. To do this, follow the steps above up to the point where you have completed the 5 long deep breaths.
- Now begin to scan your body starting with your feet and move upwards. For each part of your body, as you inhale, visualize white light entering that part and as you exhale visualize any tension stored in that area leaving your system. Move up at any pace you like, until you reach the crown of your head. So consciously relax your feet, shins, knees, thighs, buttocks, hips, stomach, chest, shoulders, arms, forearms, hands, neck, chin, mouth, cheeks, eyes, forehead, head, etc. See if you can find where you tend to store stress and tension, and then as you develop this familiarity, ensure you spend extra time in that region letting go of the stress.

Corpse Pose for Affirmation and Visualization:

- In this variation you can use Corpse Pose to set the optimum stage for visualization techniques and affirmations to work. To do this, follow the steps above up to the point where you have completed the 5 long deep breaths.
- Now begin to breathe in a conscious rhythm where you are doing twelve breath cycles per minute. Each inhalation and exhalation cycle counts as one breath and you want to be at 12 such breaths a minute. This will be slower than the 15-17 breaths you currently take per minute and this rhythm sets the stage for communicating with your Higher Self and the Universe.
- So once you reach 12 breaths per minute, stay there for a few minutes and then begin whichever visualization technique or affirmation you wish to practice. You will find yourself much more successful with them now.

Hope you enjoy this technique and it helps you get rid of stress, find peace and master the all important art of relaxation.

Best Yoga Asana for Meditation

Pooran Titali or Butterfly Pose (Benefits Chakra 2):

Kundalini Yoga Asana for Meditation Hatha Yoga Asana for Everyday Practice

Yoga Butterfly Asana (pose), just like [Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose](#), is recommended by kundalini yoga as an exercise that should be an integral part of your daily yoga practice. As this pose is part of both hatha yoga and kundalini yoga, it is part of both e-books, [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses Galleries](#) and the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses E-Book](#).

Butterfly Pose, or Pooran Titali Asana, is how I always start my yoga practice. I remember doing this pose way back in high school during tennis warm-ups. I liked it back then and I still like it now.

This asana not only works to raise the frequency of your sexual energy, so that it can be used to enrich the higher centers, but it also promotes flexibility in the all important groin region and hips. We marathon meditators understand well the importance of flexibility in these regions, as this helps us to sit for long periods of time. In fact, if there is one asana I was asked to recommend to help yogis sit in meditation, it would be Pooran Titali Asana.

Below you will find some illustrations of this simple yoga asana. I have shown two variations for the hand position and there are also two variations of how this stretch can be done, which I discuss in the practice section below.

Butterfly Yoga Asana for Meditation



Picture of Pooran Titali Asana 1



Picture of Yoga Butterfly Asana 2

Yoga Butterfly Asana for Meditation:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Butterfly Asana:

- Sit up straight and bring the soles of your feet together in front of you.
- Wrap your fingers around your toes (illustration #1) and gently pull your heels in towards your groin.
- Keeping your back straight, lean forward from the waist as far as comfortable.
- You should feel a good stretch in your groin region.
- Use your elbows as levers to push down on your calves or inner thighs.
- You may do this stretch with the [Breath of Fire](#) or with Long Deep Breathing.

b. Duration for Butterfly Asana:

- 1 - 5 minutes.

c. Benefits of Butterfly Asana:

- Excellent yoga asana to improve the flexibility in the groin and hips region. Both important regions for helping to sit in meditation.

- This asana transmutes sexual energy into higher frequencies, allowing it to be used to nourish and heal the higher chakra points. For more information on chakras you can read [Kundalini Seven Chakra System Overview](#).

d. Practice Tips for Butterfly Asana:

- A hand position variation you can use for this asana is shown in illustration #2. Here I wrap my hands around my ankles instead. This technique can sometimes provide a more intense stretch. Also, notice in illustration #2, how I am using my elbows to accentuate the stretch by pressing down on my inner thighs.
- Another variation to how this asana can be practiced is by bouncing your knees gently (like a butterfly flapping it's wings), instead of holding the stretch steadily. In this variation, make sure you don't force the legs too much. To assist in this variation you can also hold your knees and press down gently on the downward stroke. This technique helps open up the hips more.

As the end of this asana, you can inhale deeply, hold your breath and apply root lock (or mula bandha) to help redirect the energy back into the spinal cord. Root lock is described in the following article: [Raja Yoga Set for Awakening Kundalini Shakti](#).

Best Hatha Yoga Pose for Spontaneous Healing

Back Stretching Pose, Paschimothan Asana or Forward Bend (Benefits Chakras 1-7):

Hatha Yoga Pose for Health & Healing Kundalini Yoga Posture for Self-Healing

If you decide that you are going to do just one hatha yoga pose a day, I would tell you to choose this one. It is called Paschimothan Asana, or simply The Forward Bend. This terrific posture also goes by some other names, such as Seated Head to Toe Pose and Back Stretching Pose.

This pose is also a key component of kundalini yoga and according to kundalini Yoga; it is a fundamental stretch that you should perform every single day. As this pose is part of both hatha yoga and kundalini yoga, it is part of both e-books, [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses Galleries](#) and the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses E-Book](#).

In hatha yoga, this yoga asana can be categorized as both a forward bending posture or a seated posture.

The reason why this pose is so highly recommended is because when it comes to healing and longevity, no other posture is as effective. Spontaneous healing, miraculous healing, conscious healing has all been attributed to doing Paschimothan Asana. And, as if that was not enough, this pose also has other important health benefits, which are detailed below the illustration.

Thanks to my wife Trupti for the following fine illustration of Back Stretching Pose. Yes, I managed to tear her away briefly from the children to help with the blog again. You will find her singing contribution in the article, [The Greatest Vedic Devotional Mantra](#), and

below I got her to put her artistic skills to good use as well... in exchange, of course, for doing innumerable house hold chores and changing dirty diapers, so I hope you all appreciate the effort here: -D.

Back Stretching Pose for Health & Healing



Picture of Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose

Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:

- Sit with both legs extended straight in front of you.
- Make sure the legs are parallel and feet pointing straight up.
- Reach forward with your hands and hold onto your legs as low as possible without bending the knees.

- If you can hold your toes that's great, if not, arch them back towards you while holding your shins, knees or thighs. This will ensure you are stretching the calves and nerves.
- As you reach towards your feet, ensure you are bending from the waist and try to keep the back as straight as possible. Try to bring the forehead to the knees if possible.

b. Duration for Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:

- 1 minute - 5 minutes.

c. Benefits of Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:

- Excellent yoga pose to promote natural and spontaneous healing.
- Bestows health and longevity.
- Expands your entire nervous system, especially stretching the sciatic nerve, whose length, according to kundalini yoga, is directly related to the length of your life.
- The asana also promotes flexibility and strength in the hamstrings and calves.
- The pose stretches the entire back, with emphasis on the lumbar spine.
- Excellent posture to tone and rejuvenate the entire digestive system and all the important digestive organs. The liver, spleen, pancreas, kidneys, intestines, stomach all benefit from this pose.
- Helps fight obesity.

- Helps dissolve blockages that run along the shushumna (primary psychic channel for the flow of prana and kundalini. For more on this topic, see [Kundalini Seven Chakra System Overview](#)).

d. Practice Tips for Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:

- Do not strain excessively when doing this stretch. When doing the pose, start off stretching gently and as your body gets warmed up, extend the stretch further.
- Try not to hunch over, instead try to concentrate of bending forward from the hips.
- As a variation to holding your toes, you can instead hold your big toes only and pull back on them.
- It is MUCH more important to keep your legs straight, than it is to reach your toes.
- Try to keep the back as straight as possible.
- As an additional chakra breathing meditation for this pose, as you inhale feel or visualize energy being drawn in from the soles of your feet, up along the back of your legs to the base of your spine, and then as you exhale, visualize the energy passing up the center of the spine and then out through the crown of your head. Continue to do long deep breathing in this manner as you hold the pose.

[Simple Yoga Pose for Full Body Flexibility](#) [| Triangle Pose](#)

(Benefits Chakras 1-4):

The pose I will detail for you today, Triangle Pose, is one of those yoga poses that gives you a great many variations to choose from. From the base position you can take multiple postures and derive a wide range of benefits from each. These many variations to Triangle Pose give opportunities to both beginners and experts to find positions and movements that suit their level, which is why this is one of the most common poses you will find in yoga.

Other great benefits of Triangle Pose are that it is capable of working on both your strength and flexibility at the same time, and also work on your upper body and lower body simultaneously as well. So with this one pose and it's many variations you can certainly extract a lot of good for your body all at the same time 😊.

Furthermore, due to the flexibility that this pose offers, you will be able to see your progress as you move from the easy variations to the more difficult ones. Of course, the wise yogi should not rush so please follow the guidelines I have outlined in the 2 documents below.

[Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#)
[Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)

Triangle pose will make a nice addition to the Standing Poses section of our ongoing [Free Online Hatha Yoga Book](#) and, as it is a common pose used in other types of yoga, including Kundalini Yoga, it will also be part of our [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#) e-book.

Below you will find illustrations of this pose, along with practice details, benefits and other related information.

Triangle Pose for Strength and Flexibility



Illustration of Triangle Pose Variation

Kara Leah Grant illustrates the above pose. You will find much more great yoga information on her great yoga site [Yoga Lunchbox](http://theyogalunchbox.co.nz/) (<http://theyogalunchbox.co.nz/>).

Triangle Yoga Pose:

A. How to Do Triangle Pose:

- Stand straight up with feet spread wide apart as in the illustration above.
- Raise your arms up to shoulder level, out to the side, elbows straight with fingers extended and palms facing down. This is a base beginning position. From here you can come into many of the different variations.
- **Variation 1:** Turn your left foot so it is pointing to your left, while keeping the right foot pointing straight. Then bend to the left and reach down towards your toes with your left hand. You may bend your left knee slightly if necessary, but try to keep the body from leaning forward if possible. At the same time let your right hand reach straight up, palms facing forward. Once you come into the pose hold it for 10 - 60 seconds and then do the other side. This variation is great for bestowing flexibility.
- **Variation 2:** As a variation to the above pose you may do the pose as illustrated above, where you bend one leg to 90 degrees at the knees and rest your elbows on the thigh as shown. This pose is more strength oriented and is a mix of warrior pose and triangle pose. Again you should do both sides and hold for 15 seconds to 1 minute or more.
- **Variation 3:** Another variation is to reach down and across with the opposite hand to the opposite foot and hold the pose while reaching down towards your toes in this way. The other hand goes straight up in the air. Again try to keep the knees straight if you can, but bend the knees if you need to or just reach down as far as possible. In this variation you should keep your feet

pointing forward and not force the stretch. Again hold for 10 - 60 seconds. This is an excellent pose for improving your flexibility.

B. Duration for Triangle Pose:

Varies as per the variation or level. Generally 10 seconds to 1 minute is typical.

C. Benefits of Triangle Pose:

- Great simple stretch for the entire body. Especially for the lower back, sides, shoulders, hamstrings and calves.
- Helps stretch and strengthen the spine and relieve back pain.
- Helps stretch the ligaments and joints as well.
- Stretches the side abdominal muscles as well.
- Good way to feel refreshed and rejuvenated.
- Helps strengthen and tone the thighs and buttocks.
- Helps open the shoulders and chest.

D. Practice Tips and Cautions for Triangle Pose:

- This is a great yoga pose and as I mentioned above, you should find a variation suitable to your level and include it in your practice. This is a wonderful pose with which to help open up and stretch your entire body.

- Always come into the final positions slowly to ensure you don't risk injury.
- Generally Triangle Pose is done with normal slow breathing and if you are going to do the poses in a flow, inhale when you rise up and exhale when you bend down.

Easy Yoga Pose for Stretching and Warming Up | Palm Tree Pose

(Benefits Chakras 1-6)

During my Kundalini Yoga teacher's training course, we were required to take yoga classes from different types of yoga, as well as yoga classes taught by other teachers. One such class was a Hatha Yoga Class, with an excellent teacher. During this class, one of the poses we practiced was a very simple and easy looking pose, designed to stretch the entire body. Sure it was an easy yoga pose, but boy did this simple posture end up giving us a great sweat and workout. Today's yoga pose is a variation of this very pose and I am sure you too will learn how to use this simple exercise as a great full body stretch. The pose is called the Palm Tree Pose in Hatha Yoga and the variation we practiced was called Mountain Pose.

One of the first rules of doing yoga is to make sure you do easy poses first and then after you are nicely warmed up move onto more difficult poses and sets. Palm Tree Pose is perfect for the warm-up section of your practice. Since it is a very simple exercise, it is also very safe to do, and in addition, it helps to stretch the entire body nicely, thus preparing it for the tougher yoga that is to come. For more guidelines on doing yoga properly please refer to the following to articles:

[Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#)

[Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)

I noticed recently that although we have many yoga poses in our [Free Online Hatha Yoga Book](#), our Standing Poses Section needs to be beefed up a little. Palm Tree pose will contribute nicely towards this section and I will be adding some more standing poses in the near future as well. In general, the standing yoga postures tend to be

easier and simpler than poses from the other categories. Palm Tree pose will also be added to our [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#) e-book.

Below you will find an illustration of this posture, along with practice details, benefits and other related information.

Easy Yoga Pose - Palm Tree Pose

Palm Tree Pose - Easy Yoga Pose:

A. How to Do Palm Tree Pose:

- Stand straight up with feet about shoulder width apart.
- Keep your eyes open and focus on a point in front of you to help you keep your balance. Advanced practitioners can also look upwards.
- Interlace your fingers, stretch your arms up and have your palms facing UP.
- Now slowly rise up onto your toes and STRETCH UPWARDS.
- Breathe normally and hold this pose for the duration of the exercise. Keep STRETCHING. The key to getting the most out of this pose is to keep stretching upwards. This aspect makes the pose very effective.
- This pose has a few variations to this exercise and below I give 2 good ones.
- **Variation 1:** After you reach up, bend to the left and hold, then come back to center. Then bend to the right and hold. Repeat stretching gently from side to side for the remainder of the exercise. This is called Swaying Palm Tree, and is also a nice easy way to stretch and warm-up.

- **Variation 2:** In the version I referred to above, called Mountain Pose, you don't interlace your fingers. Instead keep the palm wide open, facing forward with the fingers all stretched and pointing upwards. Then STRETCH upwards, consciously stretching every joint and reaching towards the sky. In this pose, you can also stretch left and right if you like.

B. Duration for Palm Tree Pose: 15 seconds - 3 minutes.

C. Benefits of Palm Tree Pose:

- Great easy stretch for the entire body.
- Helps stretch and strengthen up the joints.
- Helps stretch the ligaments as well.
- Stretches the side abdominal muscles and back as well.
- Good for your back and spine.
- Good way to feel refreshed and rejuvenated.
- Helps build balance and mental focus.

D. Practice Tips and Cautions for Palm Tree Pose:

- This is a nice easy pose which almost everyone can practice without any problems.
- If you really stretch well, you will be able to break a sweat even while doing such a simple pose.

[Yoga Exercise for Emotional Health | Cat-Cow](#)

(Benefits Chakras 3 & 4 primarily)

Yoga Pose for Emotional Balance

Although the following Kundalini Yoga exercise is something that beginner's can easily practice, it is also an exercise that is recommended by yoga to be done everyday regardless of your level of expertise. This is because of the important benefits that this simple exercise bestows.

Cat-Cow yoga exercise is the sixteenth entry of our [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Exercises E-Book](#) and, as it is also a part of Hatha Yoga practice, it is also part of the [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses E-book](#).

The most important benefit of cat-cow is that it helps cleanse emotional debris that we end up accumulating in our gut/diaphragm region. This emotional debris then creates blockages in the flow of energy both up and down our main chakras (see [Kundalini Seven Chakra System Overview](#) for more details on chakras).

By dissolving these blockages in our energy pathways, cat-cow, helps to not only resolve remnants of old emotional traumas, pains, jealousies, anger and hurts, but also helps restore balance to the entire system.

Below you will find two illustrations of cat-cow pose. The first picture is of cow pose and the second is of cat pose. Details of how to practice this exercise are in the instructions below.

Yoga Cat-Cow Pose for Emotional Balance

Illustration #1: Kundalini Yoga Cow Pose



Illustration #2: Kundalini Yoga Cat Pose



Kundalini Yoga Cat-Cow Technique Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Cat-Cow Technique:

- Come onto the floor on all fours. Make sure your hands are directly under your shoulders, about shoulder width apart and knees are directly under your hips, about hip distance apart.
- Now come into cow pose by bringing your head up, while at the same time pushing your stomach down (as in illustration #1 above). Your eyes should be open and you should be looking upwards, thus giving your optical nerve and eye muscles a toning massage. Inhale deeply as you come into this posture.
- Next bring your head down and your chin towards your chest as you arch your back up like a cat (pressing your stomach up as in illustration #2). Exhale fully as you come into this pose.
- Start off at a slow pace, holding each position for a few seconds or more, and then begin to move faster as you feel yourself warming up. Only go as fast as you find comfortable, moving between cow pose and cat pose.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Cat-Cow Technique:*

- 1 minute - 11 minutes.
- Start slowly and build up your time steadily from there.

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Cat-Cow Technique:*

- Clears emotional debris, thus promoting good emotional health and balance.
- Clears blockages in the energy pathways caused by unresolved emotions, thus helping energy flow to take place between the higher and lower chakras.
- Excellent exercise for your entire back and spine. Massages all 72,000 nerve junctions that lie along the spinal cord.
- Helped me cure whip lash I once got :-D.
- Great for the optical nerve and eyes. Gives you sparkling eyes.

- Good to regulate and balance the thyroid gland.
- Good for your arms and shoulders.
- Good for your digestive system.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Cat-Cow Technique:*

- You can do this exercise, by either holding each position for a comfortable duration of time as you move between the poses, or doing the exercise by rapidly moving between the poses.
- Cat-Cow is a terrific exercise to start off your yoga session with. It warms up the cerebrospinal fluid which is absolutely essential to charge in order to get the most out of your yoga workout.
- The biggest mistake that yogis make is that they rock back and forth. You should simply by arching your back and moving you head as indicated. You will also find this exercise demonstrated in the [Free Online Yoga Exercise Videos](#) in the [Video for Spinal Warm-up](#).
- All the breathing should be done through the nose.

[Cobra Pose for Healthy Back](#)

(Benefits Chakras 2-5):

Hatha Yoga Posture for Back and Digestion

Kundalini yoga's terrific cobra pose is the next entry in our [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses and Exercises E-Book](#). Here I would like to mention that Kundalini Yoga, as you can see, incorporates the postures and exercises from other types of yoga as well, especially hatha yoga. In this way, [Kundalini Yoga](#) is like a superset of yoga poses and exercises and so is sometimes referred to as the Mother of all Yogas.

Cobra pose is one of those nice yoga postures which is easy to do and bestows many, many important health benefits. It is not only great for the health and flexibility of your back and spine but is also excellent for regulating your digestive system and toning other abdominal organs. Full benefits of this pose are listed below the illustrations in the practice instructions section.

From a chakra point of view, cobra pose works on your sex (swadhisthan), navel (manipura), heart (anahata) and throat (vishuddhi) chakras. That list should give you a good indication of how helpful this pose really is, as it works on four of the [seven important chakras](#).

Below you will find two illustrations of cobra pose. In this case you can use either pose. The first illustration shows cobra pose being done with straighter arms, while in the second the elbows are bent. Either way, the benefits are very similar and you are welcome to pick either or do either from time to time.

Cobra pose can also be done with the eyes open or closed. With eyes open, one should look up as that also helps tone the optical nerve and is beneficial for your eyes and vision.

Yoga Cobra Pose for Healthy Back

Picture of Kundalini Yoga Cobra Pose w/ Straight Elbows



Picture of Kundalini Yoga Cobra Pose w/ Bent Elbows



Kundalini Yoga Cobra Pose Practice Details:

a. *Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Cobra Pose:*

- Lie flat on the floor, stomach down and feet extended.
- Place your hands near your shoulders and then raise your upper body and torso up off the ground. The upper thighs should remain on the floor. Your back should arch up.
- Turn your head and look, upwards. Stretching your neck.
- You can either do Long Deep Breathing or do the [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#).
- As a variation, you can go up and down in cobra pose. Coming up and breathing in, holding the position for a few seconds and then coming back down and exhaling.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Cobra Pose:*

- 15 Seconds - 7 minutes.
- Start slowly and build up your time steadily from there.

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Cobra Pose:*

- Very good for improving the health of the back and spine. Good for toning all the back muscles and tissue related to the vertebrae.
- Massages all the digestive organs improving both digestion and elimination. Works on balancing both the manipura (navel) chakra and the swadhisthan (sex) chakra.
- Works on all the nerve junctions that lie along the spine, as well as the important psychic channels that run through the spinal cord.

- Works on improving functions of the ovaries and reproductive glands.
- Works on the thyroid and para thyroid glands and the vishuddhi (throat) chakra.
- Opens up the heart chakra (anahata) promoting softness of character.
- Good for improving vision and toning the optical nerve.
- Builds upper body strength. Specially the shoulders (deltoids), triceps and chest (pectoral) muscles. This is true if you use the modified version of cobra pose where you go up and down.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Cobra Pose:*

- Careful with your lower back! Do not over strain.
- Also, careful with the elbows if you are using the bent arm version.
- Going up and down in cobra pose is excellent for building strong arms, shoulders and chest muscles without risking injury.

[Yoga Bridge Pose](#)

(Benefits Chakras 1-4 depending on variation used):

Of all the different types of fitness exercises, yoga postures and poses are perhaps the best for helping to strengthen the back and help cure back problems and back pain. In a future article, I am going to summarize for you, all the great yoga exercises for helping you get your back strong and healthy, but in this article today I am going to present you with a fantastic yoga pose, which is perhaps the best posture for targeting the back and lower back muscles. It is called Yoga Bridge Pose and it will become a part of the [Free Yoga Postures E-book](#) hosted here on Mastery of Meditation and Yoga.

Yoga postures, not just help stretch the back, but there are also many great poses to help strengthen it. Bridge pose is one of these. Done regularly this pose will dramatically help strengthen your lower back and has a wide range of other excellent benefits as well. These are summarized below in the how to practice bridge pose section.

One of the great things about yoga poses is that individual poses have multiple variations to them, which allow both beginners and advanced yogis to practice at a level suitable to their capacity. Bridge pose is a great example of such a flexible pose, and below I have given you several variations to integrate into your practice. All these variations carry the benefits of the pose and doing any of them is going to benefit your back and body.

As always, please check with your medical care provider before embarking on any fitness regiment, including yoga, and please read our [Legal Disclaimer](#). Also, please do follow the guidelines for practicing yoga that I have laid out in the following 2 documents.

[Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#)

[Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)

Bridge pose is a fundamental yoga posture and is part of almost all types of yoga. It is also an integral part of Kundalini Yoga, thus it will also be added to our ongoing [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Poses](#) e-book.

For those who are regular readers of the blog, you will know that one variation of Bridge Pose has already been presented as part of previous yoga sets. The easy version of this pose is part of the very popular [Free Yoga Exercises for Beginners | Morning Wake-up Series](#) and also, [Free Kids Yoga Postures and Poses](#). In both those sets, it fills the need for strengthening and healing your back and body.

Below you will find illustrations of Bridge Pose, along with practice details, benefits, cautions and other related information. I hope you enjoy and benefit from this pose and stay tuned for more free yoga postures coming soon.

Free Yoga Posture for Back - Bridge Pose

Illustrations of Bridge Pose



Bridge Pose for Strengthening Back - Illustration #1



Free Yoga Posture - Advanced Bridge Pose Illustration #2



Free Yoga Posture - Easy Bridge Pose Variation - Illustration #3

Free Yoga Posture - Yoga Bridge Pose for Strong Back:

A. How to Do Bridge Pose:

- For the basic bridge pose, stretch your legs forwards and place your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Then raise your butt and torso off the ground and make a straight line all the way through to the top of your head. The final posture is shown above in illustration #1.

- Hold this posture doing [Breath of Fire](#) or Long Deep Breathing. You will feel it working your lower back, arms, shoulders, neck and hamstrings.
- **Advanced Yoga Bridge Posture - Illustration #2:** In illustration #2 above I have shown an advanced variation of this posture. Here you raise one leg up keeping it straight, while balancing yourself on the other leg. Switch legs between rounds. This pose will be tougher on the lower back and hamstrings, and only practice it when you feel good and ready.
- **Beginner's Yoga Bridge Posture - Illustration #3:** As I mentioned above, even the easy variation to Bridge Pose will be excellent for you back and body, so don't worry if need to do bridge pose as demonstrated above by my son Shivum in Illustration #3. This variation is also excellent for you. Here you have your knees bent at 90 degrees and are balancing on your hands and feet. In this posture, to really work your lower back, thrust your hips high into the air, so your torso is parallel to the ground.
- **Bridge Pose with Movement Variation:** Kundalini, Flow and Power Yogis know that using movement can often enhance the benefits of a particular posture, and that is certainly the case with Bridge Pose. To really have bridge pose work your back, arms and legs, raise yourself up and down for the duration of the exercise. So from the starting position, you want to come into bridge pose, and then lower yourself to the floor and then come into the pose again. This movement can be done for the easy or full version of bridge pose.

B. Duration for Bridge Pose:

- 15 seconds - 3 minutes.

C. Benefits of Bridge Pose:

- Excellent for strengthening the lower back.

- Helps to stretch the lower back and alleviate lower back pain.
- Good for the immune, digestive and reproductive systems.
- Strengthens the arms, legs and shoulders.
- Good for your back and spine.

D. Practice Tips and Cautions for Bridge Posture:

- There are even more variations to bridge pose. One is with fingers pointing back instead of forward and reaching up as far as possible with your hips, thus arching your back up. Another is letting your head drop back to stretch the neck. Finally, you can also push your feet down towards the floor. All these variations are valid and useful.
- If you have back problems, it is very important to progress slowly with these postures and exercises. The back needs to be strengthened over time so it can regain its health and flexibility. It is best to work with a yoga teacher when using yoga postures to deal with difficult back issues.
- Some strength is required to practice bridge pose, so make sure you work your way up gently if you are weak or unfit.

Spinal Warm-up Yoga Exercises

Free Online Book of Kundalini Yoga Poses and Kriyas - Spinal Warm-up Yoga Exercise

Kundalini Yoga Kriyas: Hatha Yoga Poses: Yoga Meditation

The first Kundalini Yoga Kriya we will explore is a very handy set called the Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises.

Kundalini Yoga Kriya #1 - Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO. BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

[Video of Spinal Warm-up Series](#) from the [Free Online Yoga Video](#) series.

Purpose of Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises:

This kundalini yoga kriya is a very good set as a warm-up before doing more advanced kriyas, or doing independently if one is just putting together their yoga practice. It very effectively warms up the most important part of the physiology, which are the entire back and especially the spinal cord region. Through the spinal cord runs the main subtle energy channel (shushumna nadi), which is considered the most important conduit for the movement of kundalini energy throughout the body. Also, along the spine lie the primary energy centers (chakras) and as kundalini energy moves up and down the spine it activates and balances the chakras and the associated organs and glands of that region.

Description of Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises:

1. Yoga Stomach Grind (Chakras 2 & 3):

a. *Guided Instructions for Yoga Stomach Grind:*

- Sit up with your legs crossed.
- Hold onto your on your knees.
- Grind your stomach in a big circle counter clockwise for half the time of the exercise. Visualize drawing a big circle with your naval.
- Switch after half the time and grind your stomach clockwise.

b. *Duration for Yoga Stomach Grind:* 1-3 minutes

c. *Benefits of Yoga Stomach Grind:*

- Excellent yoga exercise for your digestive system as it gives all your important digestive organs a massage, forcing out toxins and waste into the elimination systems of the body.
- Works on the ileocecal valve insuring the proper direction for the flow of nutrients and waste.
- Warms up and loosens the lumbar area of the back.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Stomach Grind:*

Make sure you are not just *leaning* forward and back from the waist, this is the most common mistake people make. You have to *arch* your lower back forward and back as you make the circle.

2. Spine Flex Yoga Exercise (Chakras 2-4): (also called Yoga Camel Ride)

a. Guided Instructions for Spine Flex Yoga Exercise:

- Sit up on your heels and rest your hands on your knees (rock pose).
- Inhale and arch your back forward pushing your sternum out. Exhale and bring your sternum in, arching your back out.
- Continue at a comfortable pace and rhythm.

b. Duration for Spine Flex Yoga Exercise: 1-3 minutes

c. Benefits of Spine Flex Yoga Exercise:

- Stretches the middle back and spine.
- Opens up the solar plexus promoting better flow of energy between the lower and higher centers of the body.
- Improved emotional balance.

d. Practice Tips for Spine Flex Yoga Exercise:

If you have hard time sitting on your heels you can place a small cushion under your feet/ankles for added comfort.

3. Yoga Twist (Chakras 2-4 Primarily):

a. Guided Instructions for Yoga Twist:

- Sit up with your legs crossed.

- Hold your shoulders with your fingers in front and thumb in back.
- Your elbows should be parallel to the ground and at shoulder level.
- Inhale as you twist to the left; exhale as you twist to the right. Your head moves with your torso.

b. *Duration for Yoga Twist:* 1-3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Twist:*

- Promotes flexibility in the entire back.
- Massages the inner organs.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga twist:*

The motion should be continuous and keep the pace at a level you are comfortable with. Slow down if you start to feel dizzy.

4. Yoga Neck Rolls (Chakra 5):

a. *Guided Instructions for Yoga Neck Rolls:*

- Sit up with your legs crossed.
- Open your mouth as if in a half yawn.
- Roll your neck in a big circle going in one direction for half the time and then switch directions for the rest of the time.

b. *Duration for Yoga Neck Rolls:* 1-3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Neck Rolls:*

- Releases tension in the neck and shoulders.
- Promotes better blood flow to the brain and higher centers.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Neck Rolls:*

- Spend additional time working on areas, which feel particularly tight or knotted.

Stretch Pose for Core Abdominal Strength

(Benefits Chakra 3):

Early in your kundalini yoga practice, it is important to focus on the abdominal area. This is because strengthening your navel center will, not only give you important core energy to develop your yoga practice, but will also help build your character and willpower, which are essential for a long term consistent, fruitful practice.

Below, you will find 2 illustrations of kundalini yoga stretch pose, the first is the normal pose, and it is followed by an illustration of the modified version of stretch pose. You can also switch back and forth between the two poses, as you develop your abdominal strength. Below that are practice details and instructions for this most important kundalini yoga exercise. Also, provided are the online Kundalini Yoga Kriyas which use this posture.

Picture of Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose



Picture of Beginner Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose



Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose Practice Details:

a. Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:

- Lie on your back.
- Place your hands under your buttocks palms facing down (to support your lower back).

- Raise your heels 6 inches, point your feet and toes away from you, raise your head slightly and stare at your toes. You will feel the abdominal muscles go to work immediately.
- Begin [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#).

b. Duration for Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:

- 15 seconds -11 minutes.

c. Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:

- Builds abdominal strength.
- Increases core energy and power.
- Helps develop the much coveted 6 pack abs.
- Opens, heals and balances the Manipura Chakra (aka Nabhi Chakra, Navel Chakra, Solar Plexus Chakra) which is the seat of willpower. It is recommended to build this center early in your Yoga practice as it will give you the strength and character to see things through.
- Improves your digestive system.

d. Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:

- To modify this pose you can do this posture with your legs bent at the knees, or do one leg at a time. Either way you will reduce the pressure on the abdominal muscles.
- Be careful with your lower back when practicing this pose; roll more of your arms underneath you to help give it more support.

Eagle Pose for Powerful Aura

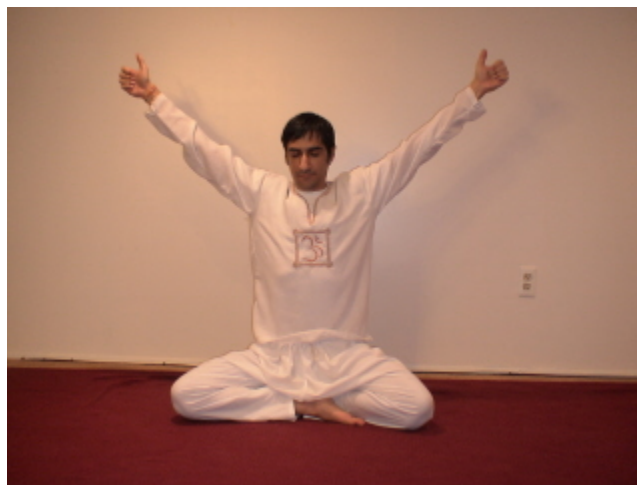
(Benefits No Specific Chakra, Benefits The Aura):

This second Kundalini Yoga pose in the [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses & Exercises E-Book](#) is perhaps the most depicted pose of Kundalini Yoga, it is the Eagle Pose. This pose is also part of many [Kundalini Yoga kriyas](#), and is part of the famous [Kundalini Yoga Morning Wake-up Series](#).

This pose does not work on any specific chakra of the [Kundalini Yoga Seven Chakra System](#) per se, but, in fact works on building your aura or magnetic field instead. Your aura is the total strength of your nervous system and it protects you from the unseen forces. This aura is also responsible for your presence, charisma, magnetism and the impact you have on others.

Below, you will find an illustration of Kundalini Yoga Eagle pose, practice details and instructions for this fantastic Kundalini Yoga exercise. Also, provided are the online Kundalini Yoga Kriyas which use this posture.

Picture of Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose



Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose Practice Details:

a. *Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:*

- Sit up with your legs crossed. You can also sit on a chair if necessary.
- Raise your arms to 60 degrees keeping the elbows straight.
- Curl your fingers in towards your upper palms. Note: Do not make a fist. Point your thumb up towards the sky.
- Begin [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#).

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:*

- 1 minute - 11 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:*

- Strengths your Aura and Magnetic Field.
- Gives you charisma, charm, magnetism and presence.
- Give you the ability to heal others.
- Gives you the ability to uplift and inspire others.
- Gives you the ability to influence others (please use wisely).
- Protects you from unseen forces (negative thoughts, viruses, bad vibrations etc.)

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:*

- As you become more proficient in Eagle Pose, try not to give up on the first sign of discomfort. If you see through these first points of resistance, the exercise will get easier as your energetic pathways open up.
- Ride Breath of Fire to help you get through the shoulder pain. The Breath of Fire will also help with charging your magnetic

field and building your aura. Take a break though from Breath of Fire if you start to feel uncomfortable.

Archer Pose for Self Confidence

(Benefits Chakras 1,3,4,6):

Kundalini Yoga is often called the yoga for warrior saints and the one pose that perhaps best reflects this unique attitude is Archer Pose. This pose will be the third entry in the [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses & Exercises E-Book](#).

Archer Pose is often part of [Kundalini Yoga kriyas](#) geared towards expansion of energy and self, as it helps open up your psychic channels to promote the greater flow of energy and power. It works on all the chakras of the [Kundalini Yoga Seven Chakra System](#) simultaneously, helping them open, heal and balance.

Below, you will find an illustration of Kundalini Yoga Archer pose, practice details, cautions and instructions for how to employ this powerful posture to help boost your confidence and self-esteem. Also, provided are the online Kundalini Yoga Kriyas which use this pose.

Picture of Kundalini Yoga Archer Pose



Kundalini Yoga Archer Pose Practice Details:

a. *Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Archer Pose:*

- Stand and place your feet wide apart.
- Now have your left foot pointing to your left, have your right foot pointing in slightly, the heels of both feet should be in a straight line. Your torso should be straight and facing forward.
- Now lean to the left so that 70% of your weight is on your left leg. Your left knee should occlude your left foot from view if you were to look down. There should be a stretch in your right upper thigh.
- Now extend your left arm out to the left as if holding a bow and turn your head to the left and gaze over your left fist.
- Now with the right hand pretend as if you are pulling back the bowstrings. Your right hand should be all the way past your right chest.
- Do Long Deep Powerful Breathing while holding this posture and gazing steadily over your left fist.
- With every breath, engage the mind, and feel yourself expanding and growing more and more powerful. Keep your gaze deadily focused, with the intent that you are breaking through all obstacles and barriers.
- After half the time reverse the direction of the posture.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Archer Pose:*

- 1 minute - 3 minutes / side

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Archer Pose:*

- Excellent yoga posture for your entire body, mind and spirit.
- Opens up and expands your energy channels.
- Builds confidence, courage and self-esteem.
- Helps the body eliminate stress from deep within the tissues.
- Expands and builds your nervous system.
- Improves concentration and mental focus.
- Expands your chest and lungs, improving your respiratory system.
- Good for toning your leg muscles and strengthening your shoulders.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Archer Pose:*

- If you are already an egomaniac and have power issues, this exercise is not for you. This posture is going to make you feel very powerful, strong and brave so use it wisely.

[Kundalini Jesus Pose for Inner Strength](#)

(Benefits Chakras 3 & 4):

This yoga pose captures the very essence of sacrifice and compassion, while at the same time building inner strength and willpower.

A core concept in all religions, which is also very much a part of Kundalini Yoga, is the idea of other mindedness. This simple, yet invaluable idea, is simply that we ought to not just live for ourselves, but should also find ways to have the strength and energy to help others. Well, the following Kundalini Yoga pose makes it possible for you to integrate this beautiful concept right into your yoga practice.

I call this pose, the Jesus Pose, in honor of one of the greatest examples of inner strength and self-sacrifice that humanity has ever known. We all know the wonderful [benefits of yoga practice](#), but by incorporating this exercise into your practice, you can take it to another level by making the practice not just for yourself, but also for others. In addition to cultivating this attitude of other mindedness, this pose is also great for increasing your inner strength and willpower.

I tend to add this exercise to the end of my set, especially anytime I am doing a [Heart Chakra Set](#), but you can add it to other sets as well. If you are a Kundalini Yoga teacher, I find the students really willing to do this pose for longer periods of time despite discomfort it produces. The motivating statement I use is along the lines of the following,

"Are you willing to carry the load for others who are unable or unwilling to carry their own load?" From the response I see, the answer always seems to be a resounding "YES!"

This, yoga pose, is in the seventeenth, entry in the [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Poses E-book](#). As our collection of Kundalini Yoga poses grows you will be able to use these exercises to create your own customized yoga sets. To do so you can use the guidelines laid in the following article: [6 Important Guidelines for Designing Kundalini Yoga Sets](#).

Kundalini Yoga Pose for Inner Strength & Sacrifice

Illustration #1: Kundalini Yoga Jesus Pose



Illustration #2: Kundalini Yoga Jesus Pose (Side View)



Kundalini Yoga Jesus Pose for Inner Strength & Sacrifice:

a. Instructions for practicing Jesus Pose for Inner Strength & Sacrifice:

- You can do this pose, sitting on your heels in Rock Pose, sitting, legs crossed in Sukh Asan, sitting on a chair or while standing. Generally I do it in Rock Pose sitting on my heels, with my back straight (as shown in the pose illustrations above).
- Bring your hands straight out to the sides with palms facing up. The arms should be shoulder level and parallel to the ground. Throw your head back and close your eyes.
- Begin [Breath of Fire](#), at a pace and intensity which is comfortable for you.
- Hold past the point of discomfort. Remember you are doing this exercise to help burn the Karmic Debt of others and not just for yourself. Keep that in mind as the pain tries to get you to quit.

b. Duration for Jesus Pose for Inner Strength & Sacrifice:

- 1 minute - 11 minutes. Generally add this exercise to the end of a set and do it such that you have to at least bear some discomfort (see tips below for more on this as well).

c. Benefits of Jesus Pose for Inner Strength & Sacrifice:

- Helps burn the Karmic Debt of others.
- Builds your inner strength and willpower.
- Opens your Heart Chakra and makes you compassionate.
- Helps you develop the ability to sacrifice and be thoughtful of others.

d. Practice Tips for Jesus Pose for Inner Strength & Sacrifice:

- Don't give up on the first sign of discomfort. If you can get through that phase, you will find your energy systems opening up and the exercise getting EASIER to sustain.
- If you are teacher, remind the students of the sacrifice they are making here, this motivates and inspires them to hold on a little longer than they normally would.
- Add this exercise to the end of a set and take your kundalini yoga practice up to a higher level.

Plank Pose for Arms and Upper Body

(Benefits Chakras 3 & 4):

If you looking to tone up your arms, as well as strengthen your back and spine, this pose is perfect for you. Plank pose is simple enough for beginners to do and is a good way to balance your yoga workout by adding some upper body work into it.

There are a few variations to this pose and in the pictures below I am demonstrating a relatively uncommon variation, in which I do the pose with toes extended instead of curled under. This variation is often used in Kundalini Yoga and is a little more difficult than the basic pose. I mention some of the other variations in the Practice Tips section below as well.

Yoga Plank Pose for Upper Body Strength

Illustration #1 Basic Yoga Plank Pose



Illustration #2 Kundalini Yoga Plank Pose (Toes Extended)



Yoga Plank Position for Upper Body Strength:

a. *Instructions for practicing Yoga Plank Pose:*

- Most of us are familiar with doing push ups, and plank pose is essentially the up position when doing a push up.
- For plank pose be sure to keep your body in a straight line, like I have demonstrated above. Don't allow the butt to sag and the hands should be directly underneath the shoulders.
- There are also the two typical eye position variations. You can keep the eyes open and fix your gaze steadily at a point in front of you (typical of Hatha Yoga), or you can do this pose with your eyes closed (kundalini yoga).
- Breathing is normal, except if you are doing a particular Kundalini Yoga Kriya, which might require you to do [Breath of Fire](#) while holding Plank Pose.

b. *Duration for Yoga Plank Pose:*

- 15 seconds - 5 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Plank Pose:*

- Strengthens the arms, wrists, shoulders, back and spine.
- Develops your core strength and abdominal muscles.
- Tones the triceps.
- Good for improving your nervous system.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Plank Pose:*

- Advanced variations of Plank Pose include, lifting one leg up and holding the pose, or lifting one arm up and holding the pose.
- In the Kundalini Yoga variation, the toes are kept extended as show in illustration #2. This can put more pressure on the lower back, so be careful when using this version.

[Deep Knee Bends for Thighs and Buttocks](#)

(Benefits Chakras 1 and 2 Primarily):

One of the best yoga exercises for strengthening your legs is [Frog Pose for Toned Legs](#), but not far behind is another superb and simple exercise for firming and toning your thighs and buttocks, and today I would like to detail this excellent exercise for you. It is simply called Yoga Deep Knee Bends or Deep Squats Yoga Exercise, and for those familiar with my [free yoga videos](#), you will have already encountered it in the popular [Rapid Weight Loss Yoga Exercises Set](#).

As kids there was a famous exercise that we all used to have fun doing, which was called "Uttack Battack", which is essentially standing up and squatting back down repeatedly, and Deep Knee Bends is pretty much this same exercise with a small variation for the arms. For those of you familiar with Indian Bollywood Actresses, Shilpa Shetty, who is known for having a slim, fit and firm body, confessed that this very exercise was instrumental in helping her shape and tone her thighs and buttocks early in her career as well. So for those of you looking to get your legs and butt toned and shapely, it's time to revisit this favorite exercise from the days past.

Of course, there are more important benefits to having your lower body strong and fit, than just sexy looks, and a workout including Deep Knee Bends is sure to help you enjoy those many benefits as well. These I have detailed below in the practice section for this exercise. In addition, you will find cautions, modifications and illustration of this exercise in that section as well. Deep Squats Yoga Exercise will be part of the following 2 free online e-books here on Mastery of Meditation and Yoga: [Free Hatha Yoga Poses](#) and [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#), where you will find a huge collection of other yoga poses and exercises, fully illustrated and detailed.

Please also follow the guidelines on how to practice yoga, which I have detailed in the following 2 articles, [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#) and [Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#).

Yoga Exercise to Firm and Tone Thighs and Buttocks

Illustration #1 Deep Knee Bends Starting Position



Illustration #2 Deep Knee Bends Ending Position



Illustration #3 Deep Knee Bends Ending Position - Side View



Deep Squats Yoga Exercise for Toned Thighs and Buttocks:

a. Instructions for Deep Squats Yoga Exercise:

- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart.

- Extend both arms straight out in front of you, with fingers extended and palms facing down. Illustration #1.
- Find a point in front of you to concentrate on, this will help you with your balance and focus.
- Inhale through the nose as you squat down slowly. You should try to squat down to where you are making a ninety degree angle at your knees as I have shown above in Illustrations 2 and 3.
- Exhale as you slowly stand back up.
- Continue at a smooth, steady pace for the duration of the workout.

b. Duration for Deep Squats Yoga Exercise:

- 1-5 mins

c. Benefits of Deep Squats Yoga Exercise:

- Excellent for firming and toning your thighs and buttocks.
- Increases energy and builds vitality.
- Helps burn fat and calories to promote healthy weight loss.
- Works on your fitness level by increasing your heart rate and circulation.
- Increases virility and improves sexual fitness.
- Strengthens your shoulders.

d. Practice Tips for Deep Squats Yoga Exercise :

- If you have bad knees you need to be careful with this exercise. Only go as far down as you are comfortable.
- If you feel your thighs burning too much, stop and take a short break. Then begin again once you have recovered.
- If your shoulder tires, but your legs feel strong, you can lower your hands and continue with the squats.
- Another great exercise that I would like to mention for shaping and toning your thighs and butt is Yoga Chair Pose and you will find details for that exercise in the following article: [Yoga Chair Pose for Sexual Health](#).

Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose for Health and Wellbeing

(Benefits Chakras 3 & 4):

Welcome to the fourth entry in the [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses & Exercises E-Book](#). The first few poses were excellent, but not very difficult to do. Kundalini Yoga Camel pose is a bit more challenging.

This pose is one though that is worth having in your repertoire, as it is responsible for a long list of wonderful health benefits and, if done regularly, will certainly elevate the level of your overall wellbeing. Many [Kundalini Yoga kriyas](#) incorporate Camel Pose and in the near future I will be uploading some onto Mastery of Meditation.

Camel Pose is also part of Hatha Yoga and is a key asana (posture), in that type of Yoga as well. In fact this asana is widely recognized for its benefits and has been embraced by almost all types of Yoga. Below, you will find two illustration of Kundalini Yoga Camel pose. The first is a modified version that should be practiced by beginners, following that is the full version of Camel Pose, which you should try only when ready. As usual, the practice details, cautions and instructions for how to employ this terrific posture, to help boost your health and wellbeing, are also provided.

Picture of Modified Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose



Picture of Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose



Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose:

- To start this yoga pose, come up onto your knees and have your feet hip distance apart, with toes extended.

- For modified Camel pose have your hands, fingers pointing downward supporting your lower back and arch back as far as comfortable (Illustration #1 above).
- Now tilt your head back and such that you are facing the ceiling.
- You should be pressing forward with your hips and also expanding your chest region, by pressing your elbows back.
- In the full version of Camel Pose, drop your hands back and hold on to your heels. Again you should arch your back, press your hips out and expand your chest.
- Begin [Breath of Fire Yoga Pranayama](#), in either pose.

b. Duration for Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose:

- 30 seconds - 7 minutes

c. Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose:

- Excellent yoga posture for overall health and wellbeing.
- The pose expands the abdominal region, helping digestion and elimination. It helps to heal and balances the Navel Chakra.
- Opens and heals the Heart Chakra by expanding and stretching the chest region. Excellent for the respiratory and circulatory systems. Bestows softness of character.
- Releases tension in the ovaries and helps the immune system by working on the lymphatic system.

- The posture, activates and balances the Throat Chakra, and works to heal and rejuvenate the thyroid and parathyroid glands.
- The exercise opens up the hips and builds strength in the thighs and arms.
- Stretches and strengthens the shoulders.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Camel Pose:*

- Start with the modified version of Camel Pose and work your way to doing the full version over time.
- If the Breath of Fire makes you dizzy or uncomfortable, just switch to normal breathing instead.

[Chair Pose for Sexual Health](#)

(Benefits Chakras 1 & 2):

Hatha Yoga Posture for Toning Thighs & Buttocks

Chair pose is not chair yoga (which you will now find here - [Chair Yoga for Energy and Stress Relief](#)). Not that I have anything against chair yoga, I am (as you must have guessed by now :-)) a fan of all types of yoga, but chair pose, unlike the easier postures of chair yoga, is instead a tough little yoga pose. It is for toning your leg muscles, building lower body strength and improving your overall sexual health.

Chair pose, is the fifth entry in our [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses and Exercises E-Book](#) and is certainly a posture worth including in your yoga practice for building lower body strength and sexual virility. This terrific exercise is part of many different types of yoga, such as Hatha yoga and Kundalini Yoga, and is also a pose used by western physiotherapy when leg muscles need to be strengthened. Below you will find several pictures of chair yoga pose. These illustrations include a modified version as well. Please feel free to use this modification until you feel strong enough to try the full posture. You will also see close-ups of the hand positions as they are a little tricky to describe. The demonstrations below are with my eyes open, but Kundalini Yoga practice is generally done with your eyes closed, and you may do this exercise with eyes closed as well.

Finally, please be careful of your knees, and even in the modified version of this pose, only go as far down as you are comfortable. In time you can work your way lower and then finally do the full version when you feel ready. Below the pictures, are written instructions for practicing this yoga posture, along with other pertinent details.

Illustrations of Yoga Chair Pose

Side View Picture of Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose



Front View Picture of Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose



Hands Position Picture of Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose



Picture of Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose Hands Close-up



Side View of Modified Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose



Front View of Modified Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose



Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose:

- Stand and place your feet shoulder width apart, with toes pointing outward.
- Lean forward till your back in parallel to the ground.
- Reach down and grasp your ankles, such that the elbows are passing from the inside of your knees.
- Keep your head up and begin [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#).

b. Duration for Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose:

- 15 Seconds - 3 minutes.
- Start slowly and build up your time steadily from there.

c. Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose:

- Excellent yoga posture for toning your thighs and buttocks.
- Improves sexual health and builds sexual virility and vitality.
- Helps the body burn fat to promote healthy weight loss.

d. Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Chair Pose:

- Use the modified versions illustrated above.
- Take a break, if the legs start to burn too much and then restart the exercise again once ready.
- Be careful with your knees and only go as far down as comfortable, regardless of whether you are doing the modified posture or the full pose.
- If Breath of Fire is too much, then switch to long deep breathing or normal breathing while continuing to hold the pose.
- You can also do the modified version of chair pose by standing against a wall and working your way lower as your legs get stronger. This is the technique used in physiotherapy in general.

[Downward Facing Dog for Nerve Strength](#)

(Benefits Chakra 1, 3 & 4):

Kundalini Yoga Posture to Tone the Nervous System

In kundalini yoga, although muscle strength is desired and developed, it is not considered real strength. Nerve strength is considered real strength and the following yoga position is ideal for developing this much coveted power.

The following pose is again common to both hatha yoga and kundalini yoga and thus, is a part of both the e-books that are available on Mastery of Meditation. The [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses Galleries](#) and the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses E-Book](#).

This posture has many names to it as well. In hatha yoga, it is called Mountain Pose, while in kundalini yoga it is called Triangle Pose. The pose is also commonly called Downward Facing Dog which I will refer to it as here.

In kundalini yoga, you might have noticed, I am always emphasizing building the health and fitness of the internal systems first and then allowing the greater flow of kundalini to take place. This is opposed to directly opening the chakra points and forcing an increased flow of energy. This approach, of building the system up and then allowing energy flow to increase, helps prevent problems with premature kundalini eruptions, as the body, especially the nervous system, is now able to handle the greater flow of energy without getting fried.

You can read the [10 Important Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#) and the following 2 articles for more details on how best to approach and practice kundalini yoga: [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga](#) and [Kundalini Seven Chakra System Overview](#). In addition, the following

article discusses similar concepts: [The Top 3 Chakra Meditation Techniques](#).

Below you will find an illustration of hatha yoga Mountain Pose and details regarding this important yoga position.

Hatha Yoga Mountain Pose for Nerve Strength

Picture of Hatha Yoga Mountain Pose



Hatha Yoga Mountain Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Yoga Downward Facing Dog Position:

- Essentially you are making an inverted V as shown above in the illustration.
- Make sure you press your heels down towards the floor and press your head down towards the knees.

- Your legs are parallel and knees locked and your arms are parallel with your elbows locked.
- Press up with you buttocks to elongate both sides of this triangle.

b. *Duration for Yoga Downward Facing Dog Position:*

- 15 seconds - 5 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Downward Facing Dog Position:*

- Excellent yoga position to strengthen and build your nervous system. Develops the nerves throughout your entire body, with extra focus on the arms, legs and spine.
- This yoga pose also build arm strength and leg strength.
- It promotes flexibility in the hamstrings, calves, forearms and shoulders.
- Good for the digestive system and overall energy of the body.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Downward Facing Dog Position:*

- Take breaks in between if you are not strong enough to hold this position for prolonged periods of time. Slowly as your arm strength increases, increase the time for the pose.
- Use a mirror or have a picture taken of you while in this position, as that will really help you in mastering this pose.
- It is good to stretch the shoulder first, before practicing this yoga posture.

Bow Pose for Eternal Youth

(Benefits Chakras 3 & 4):

Hatha Yoga Dhanur Asana for Total Healing

Bow pose or Dhanur Asana is perhaps the face of yoga. It is another one of those yoga poses that is worth incorporating into your daily practice. It is not as difficult as Wheel Pose, which is detailed in the article, [Advanced Yoga Technique - Wheel Pose](#), but it provides many of the same benefits and a few more when done the special Kundalini Yoga way.

Bow pose is again common to both hatha yoga and kundalini yoga and thus, is a part of both the e-books that are available on Mastery of Meditation. The [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses Galleries](#) and the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses E-Book](#).

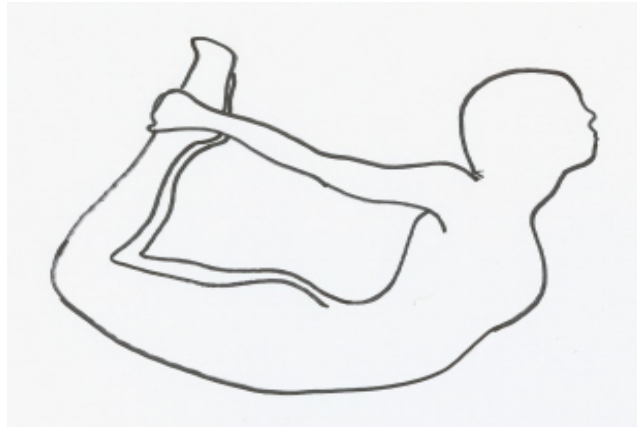
Bow pose has a long list of benefits, especially for the entire digestive system, but the technique employed by kundalini yoga when practicing this posture, is the real secret for unleashing it's full potential. In kundalini yoga, we rock back and forth in bow pose, thus giving our entire abdominal area a terrific massage.

Practicing bow pose in this way is reputed to help you maintain eternal youth. Although that might be a slight exaggeration, my yoga teacher [Ravi Singh](#), pointed out that he knows of a particular yogi in California who rocks in bow pose for 20 minutes daily, and his age was impossible to tell. Of course, don't jump ahead to this advanced method, until you have first mastered the basics of this posture.

Below you will find an illustration of Bow Pose (Dhanur Asana) and details regarding this fundamental yoga posture.

Yoga Bow Pose for Eternal Youth

Picture of Yoga Bow Pose (Dhanur Asana)



Yoga Bow Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Bow Pose:

- Start by lying on your stomach with your chin on the floor.
- Next, bend your knees and bring your heels towards your buttocks.
- **Beginner Yogis:** Reach back and grasp your ankles, keeping the rest of your body on the floor. Pull your heels into your buttocks.
- **Intermediate Yogis:** Raise yourself up off the floor as shown in the illustration above, by pressing your ankles away from you. Your chest and thighs should be raised off the floor.
- **Advanced Yogis:** Rock back and forth in bow pose, inhaling as you come forward, exhaling on the way back.

b. Duration for Kundalini Yoga Bow Pose:

- 15 seconds - 5 minutes.

c. Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Bow Pose:

- The ultimate yoga pose to improve and perfect your digestive system.
- Excellent for your respiratory system, to relieve breathing problems and ailments such as asthma, etc.
- Good for the entire spine and back.
- Great pose for improving the overall flexibility of the entire body.
- Helps improve overall health and wellbeing.
- Good for weight loss.

d. Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Bow Pose:

- Progress gently towards the advanced version. For some, even the beginner version is difficult to get into, in which case just bring your heels as close to your buttocks as you can, and reach as far back with your arms as possible.
- Do not eat for at least 2-3 hours before practicing this posture, or you will be quite uncomfortable.
- Careful of your knees and back when doing this pose.

Frog Pose for Toned Thighs

(Benefits Chakras 1, 2 & 4):

Want to have toned, strong legs right through life? If so, this Kundalini Yoga exercise is just what the doctor ordered. It is the famous kundalini yoga frog pose.

Kundalini yoga frog pose is a hardcore kundalini yoga exercise, that is quite unique to this type of yoga and it will be the next entry in our [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses and Exercises E-Book](#).

Certainly, frog pose is fantastic for building lower body strength, and especially good for shaping the legs and thighs, but at the same time this exercise is also indicated for working on the heart chakra and the associated functions of that region. The health of the heart, respiration and overall circulation are all improved by practicing frog pose.

Although some flexibility in the hamstrings helps one to practice the frog pose (froggies), this exercise is primarily a strength move. You will find lots of important details in the practice section below the illustrations. Be ready for a workout!

Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose for Toning the Legs

Picture of Starting Position of Yoga Frog Pose (Eyes Closed)



Picture of Starting Position of Yoga Frog Pose (Eyes Open)



Picture of Ending Position for Yoga Frog Pose



Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose Practice Details:

a. *Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose:*

- Squat on the floor on your toes, with your feet apart and your heels either touching or very close together.
- Have your knees spread out and your arms inside your knees with your finger tips touching the floor. The elbows are straight.
- Look up, you can have your eyes opened or closed. Inhale. This is the starting position for frog pose.
- Rise up now by straightening your legs. At the same time bring your head towards your knees and keep your fingers touching the floor. Your heels should move down towards the floor. Straighten your legs as much as possible. Exhale. This is the end position for frog pose. This completes 1 repetition.
- Come back down to the starting position and repeat the cycle as many times as indicated.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose:*

- Beginners, start with as many as you can do and work up to 26 froggies.
- Intermediates, work up to 54 froggies.
- Advanced, work up to 108 froggies.
- Fanatics, keep going :-).

c. Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose:

- Shapes, tones and strengthens the legs and lower body. Specially the thighs muscles.
- Builds the cardiovascular system and respiratory system. Promoting better circulation and better respiration.
- Promotes flexibility in the hamstrings and calves.
- Overall, builds one level of fitness and endurance.
- Builds sexual potency and virility.

d. Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose:

- Careful with your knees. If you have bad knees, approach this exercise with caution.
- Take breaks in between if your legs are burning too much. Once they recover continue on.
- This yoga exercise *will* get your heart rate up, so careful not to get dizzy. If you feel breathless, light headed or faint, stop and take a break.
- Here is a secret. Doing froggies slowly is *harder*. Some kundalini yoga kriyas (sets) demand you go slowly, but in general a brisk pace will allow you to do more. Just don't push too hard and stay within your personal comfort range.
- It is ok to be sore in the legs the next day. It means the muscles got a much needed workout.
- It is beneficial to stretch the hamstrings before doing frog pose.

Locust Pose for Digestive Power

(Benefits Chakra 3):

This pose is called Locust Pose or Shalabh Asana and it is very good for your lower back as well as toning your digestive organs. It is a slightly more difficult posture, so I will give you some nice variations below to help you practice and master this fundamental yoga pose.

This pose, as you will see below, can be practiced in the classical hatha yoga style, by holding it steady, or dynamically as well, which tends to be the kundalini yoga approach, by adding movement and dynamic breathing to it. In either case, please pay special attention to the cautions I have indicated for this posture, as it can be challenging for the beginner yogi.

Classical Hatha Yoga Pose - Locust Pose

Illustration for Locust Pose



Classical Hatha Yoga's Shalabh Asana:

a. Basic Instructions for Hatha Yoga Locust Pose:

- Start by lying flat on your stomach, with your chin on the floor.
- Have your hands in fists and place them underneath your body at the point where your hips and torso meet. As a variation to this hand position, you can also have your hands along your body, with your palms facing down, instead of tucked underneath in a fist.
- Close your eyes.
- Now push down with your hands against the floor and at the same time raise both your legs up as shown in the illustration above. Only raise your legs as far up as comfortable.
- Hold this position, which breathing deeply through the nose.
- Lower your legs and release your arms once you are done with the pose and rest on your right cheek.

- **Variation for Beginners:**

If you are just starting yoga or starting to practice this pose for the first time, start with lifting just one leg at a time, instead of both. As you get stronger and more fit you can move to the classical locust pose as I described above.

- **Dynamic Locust Pose:**

Once you can do the classical version described above, you can try the dynamic version of this posture as well. In this variation, lift your legs up as you inhale and then lower them as you exhale. Continue this dynamic motion for the duration of the exercise.

- **Locust Pose with Dynamic Breathing:**

Another variation is to hold the classical pose illustrated above, and then do [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#) with holding this posture. This too is a very good variation to this pose.

- Finally, you can also do the dynamic movement of the legs going up and down, which doing breath of fire at the same time. Now you are practicing some serious Kundalini Yoga 😊.

b. Duration for Hatha Yoga Locust Pose:

- 10 seconds - 3 mins

c. Benefits of Hatha Yoga Locust Pose:

- Excellent for strengthening your lower back muscles.

- Tones all the digestive organs and excellent for the digestive system.
- Promotes stress relief and deep relaxation.
- Strengthens and firms the hamstrings and buttocks.
- Increases flexibility in the lower body.

d. Practice Tips and Cautions for Classical Hatha Yoga Locust Pose:

- Although this exercise is great for you back, if you have major back issues you should proceed with caution. For minor back issues, this exercise can be used as an effective treatment.
- As this pose increases blood flow and puts pressure on the heart, you should be cautious if you have high blood pressure or major cardiovascular issues.
- Feel free to take breaks in between the leg raises to allow your muscles to recover while you develop your strength and stamina.

[Yoga Exercises to Cleanse Your Aura](#)

(Benefits Aura):

Clearing and developing the power of one's aura and magnetic field is an important aspect of yoga in general and is especially true in Kundalini Yoga. There are many wonderful exercises to accomplish this, such as [Eagle Pose for Powerful Aura](#), which I have published previously, and the exercise in this article is another fundamental Kundalini Yoga exercise great for cleansing the aura and charging your magnetic field.

The Aura is a part of the 10 Bodies of Light Model, on which [Yoga Numerology and Master Number Analysis](#) is based, and it is the sum total of your nerve strength and bio-electric energy. It plays a subtle but important role in your life, as the aura spontaneously affects and influences others who come within its reach. Thus, a person with a clear, powerful aura would be very charming and magnetic, and able to mesmerize others with their simple presence and being. In addition, the aura is like a shield against negative energies and unknown forces which may wish to influence or harm you.

For anyone who has taken a Kundalini Yoga class, the section that involves shoulder work is usually the most dreaded ☺, and unfortunately most work involving the aura requires this kind of exercise. This technique is no different and will tend to challenge your mental willpower, more than your physical prowess. Just keep in mind all the great benefits you are going to enjoy, to help you get through the tough phases of this technique.

Another point I wish to make regarding cleansing and strengthening the aura, is that the breath plays an important role in that process. The Kundalini Yoga techniques which are designed to clear the Aura, almost always have a vigorous breathing pattern associated with

them. This technique is again in line with this approach, and uses the powerful [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#) to maximize its purification powers. So, keep that in mind as you practice this technique.

This exercise will be part of the Free [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#) series here on Mastery of Meditation. In that series and the other free online e-books you will find a large collection of other yoga poses and exercises, fully illustrated and detailed as well. Please also follow the guidelines on how to practice kundalini yoga, which I have detailed in the following 2 articles, [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#) and [Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#).

Yoga Criss-Cross Technique for Cleansing Aura

Illustration #1 Starting Position for Yoga Criss-Cross



Illustration #2 Alternate Mudra for Yoga Criss-Cross



Illustration #3 Yoga for Aura Criss-Cross



Illustration #4 Yoga for Aura Criss-Cross



Yoga Criss-Cross Technique for Cleansing Aura:

a. Instructions for Yoga Criss-Cross:

- Sit in easy pose (legs crossed). I am using a firm cushion in the illustrations above and sitting in Burmese Style (one leg in front of the other).
- Extend both arms in front of you, slightly raised such that your palms are at hairline level (top of the forehead).
- You can either have all your finger extended as I have done in Illustration #1, or do the more advanced mudra, where your thumb is at the base of your pinkie (Illustration #2) with the other fingers extended.
- Close you eyes and tune into your energy. As you do this exercise you can visualize your Aura glowing brighter and

brighter.

- Begin to rapidly criss-cross the arms in front of you, bringing one on top (Illustration #3) and then the other (Illustration #4). At the same time begin the powerful the Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise. The arms should cross only up to about the elbows and go outwards only slightly wider than shoulder width, as I have shown in the pictures above.
- Continue to criss-cross your arms in this way at a rapid rhythmic pace for the duration of the exercise.

b. *Duration for Criss-Cross Technique:*

- 30 seconds - 5 mins

c. *Benefits of Criss-Cross Technique for Cleansing Aura:*

- Cleanses and powers your Aura.
- Strengthens your Magnetic Field.
- Bestows charisma and magnetism.
- Tones your arms, shoulders and chest muscles.
- Improves your respiratory system.
- Builds willpower and character.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Criss-Cross for Powerful Aura:*

- Take a break in between if it gets too difficult, and then start again when ready.

- As you develop your mastery of this technique, start to see through the initial phases of discomfort that you feel. It will get easier as the energy pathways open up and your mind and body stop resisting the pain.
- At the end of the exercise, use Mula Bandha as I have described in the following article, [5 Simple Tips to Elevate Your Yoga Practice](#). This will give your Aura an additional boost.

Special Yoga Set for Core Abdominal Power Yoga

(Poses Benefit Chakra 3 Primarily):

Yoga Exercises for Navel Strength and Power

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

[Core Abdominal Power Yoga Set Video](#)

Purpose of Core Abdominal Power Yoga Exercises:

The following set of Kundalini Yoga exercises builds the navel center and works on the 3rd Chakra (energy vortex) of the Kundalini Energy System. The 3rd Chakra is called the Manipura or Nabhi Chakra. The navel center is not only important for core energy and necessary physical fuel, but also the Manipura chakra, which governs this region, is associated with the attributes of willpower and strength of character. Thus, it is recommended that early in one's yoga practice one builds and balances this chakra. Doing so helps one to remain committed to their yoga and meditation practice, thus reaping the full rewards that such practice brings. Of course developing washboard like abs in the process does no harm either :-).

Description of Core Abdominal Power Yoga Exercises:

1. Single Leg Rotations: (Chakra Padasana)

a. Guided Instructions for Single Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

- Lie flat on your back.
- Raise your right leg up to about 45 degrees.

- Point your feet and toes away from you.
- Begin the [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#) and keeping your leg straight rotate it in a big circle clockwise. Make the circle as big as you can without touching the floor.
- Do 10 rotations in 1 direction and then without resting rotate the same leg in the other direction (counter-clockwise).
- Repeat with the left leg.

b. Duration for Single Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

Takes about 1 minute / leg, but use the count provided above.

c. Benefits of Single Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

- Builds your Navel Center and strengthens and tones your abdominal muscles.
- Activates and balances the Manipura Chakra (naval center).
- Builds willpower and strength of character.
- Loosens and opens up the hips.

d. Practice Tips for Single Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

- To modify the exercise bend you knees or do fewer rotations at a stretch. You can also take rest as needed.

(Take a short break to let your hip flexors and abdominals recover).

2. Double Leg Rotations:

a. Guided Instructions for Double Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

- Continue to lie flat on your back.
- Now raise both legs up to about 45 degrees.
- Point your feet and toes away from you.
- Begin the [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#) and keeping your legs straight rotate them in a big circle clockwise. Make the circle as big as you can without touching the floor.
- Do 10 rotations in 1 direction and then without resting rotate your legs in the other direction (counter-clockwise).

b. Duration for Double Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

Takes about 1 minute, but use the count provided above.

c. Benefits of Double Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

- Builds your Navel Center and strengthens and tones your abdominal muscles.
- Activates and balances the Manipura Chakra.
- Builds willpower and strength of character.
- Loosens and opens up the hips.

d. Practice Tips for Double Leg Rotations Kundalini Yoga Exercise:

- To modify the exercise bend your knees or do fewer rotations at a stretch. You can also take rest in between as needed. To support your lower back you may want to put your hand underneath your buttocks with your palms facing down.

3. Relax in Yoga Corpse Pose: (also called Shav Asana)

a. Guided Instruction for Yoga Corpse Pose:

- Lie on your back and have your arms out to your sides about six to twelve inches away from your body.
- Turn your palms slightly upward.
- Relax your body and breath.

b. Duration for Yoga Corpse Pose: 1-2 minutes.

c. Benefits of Yoga Corpse Pose:

- Allows the body to consolidate the gains from the previous exercises.
- Helps the body to heal and rejuvenate itself.
- Promotes relaxation and peace.

d. Practice Tips for Yoga Corpse Pose:

- Try to consciously relax your entire body. Release all your tensions and worries and stay in the present moment as best you can.

4. Kundalini Yoga Abdominal Pop Corn Exercise:

a. Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Abdominal Pop Corn Exercise:

- Lie on your back, bend your legs and bring you knees in towards your chest.
- Hold on to each knee. Right hand grasps right knee, and left hand grasps left knee.
- Now try to explode off the ground like you are a pop corn popping. So you are trying to launch your whole body towards the ceiling (you will probably not leave the ground, but it's the

effort that counts here :-).

- If you are doing this right, pretty soon your abdominal muscles will let you know.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Abdominal Pop Corn Exercise:* 1-5 mins

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Abdominal Pop Corn Exercise:*

- Very good for building your core power and abdominal strength.
- Good for building overall fitness and stamina.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Abdominal Pop Corn Exercise:*

- Another yoga exercise that you should not be quickly fooled by. If doing it correctly it is a great way to burn fat and develop strong abdominal muscles without putting any strain on the joints and lower back. Make sure you are using a soft surface when doing this exercise.

5. Yoga Boat Pose (Maha Shakti Kriya or Nauk Asana):

a. *Instructions for Yoga Boat Pose:*

- Lie flat on your back.
- Have your arms straight out to the sides with your palms facing in. Keep your legs together and straight out as well with your toes pointing forward.
- Now bring your legs and torso up such that you are balancing on your sacrum. Keep your eyes focused on your toes, this will help you keep your balance. You are forming a V shape, with your legs and torso.
- Begin the [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#).

b. *Duration for Yoga Boat Pose:* 1-3 minutes

c. *Benefits of Yoga Boat Pose:*

- Builds your Navel Center and strengthens and tones your abdominal muscles.
- Activates and balances the Manipura Chakra.
- Builds willpower and strength of character.
- Awakens all the systems in the body (digestive, nervous, endocrine, circulatory, etc.).
- Develops focus and balance.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Boat Pose:*

- To modify the exercise hold on to your knees or thighs. Keeping a steady gaze upon your toes will go a long way in helping you keep your balance. If you need to, you can take a break and then come into the pose again once you are ready. This is a very powerful kundalini yoga pose and is sometimes practiced on its own as a complete set (kriya). You can build up the time for Maha Shakti Kriya to 11 minutes.

6. Relax in Yoga Corpse Pose (#3 above) for 2-5 minutes:

This concludes the Core Abdominal Power Yoga Exercises.

Crow Pose to Cleanse Root Chakra

(Benefits Chakras 1 & 4):

Hatha Yoga Posture for Root Chakra Opening

Kundalini yoga crow pose, is the sixth entry in our [Free Online Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses and Exercises E-Book](#) and this pose helps balance two very important chakras of the [kundalini seven chakra system](#). Crow pose works primarily on clearing the [root chakra](#) (muladhara chakra), but at the same time it also helps in opening the [heart chakra](#) (anahata chakra).

By working to cleanse and balance the root chakra, this posture helps to bestow good health, strong sense of security, connectivity to nature and ample wealth. By balancing the heart chakra, this yoga pose helps love, compassion, forgiveness and generosity flow abundantly from you.

Crow pose is also common to various schools of yoga, including Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga.

Below you will find two illustrations of crow yoga pose. The first is a modified version of crow pose, while the second is the full version. Please do feel free to use the modified version, never risk injury by trying a posture you don't feel ready to do.

Unlike other kundalini yoga exercises, this posture is done with the eyes open. Detailed instructions follow below the illustrations.

Yoga Crow Pose for Clearing Root Chakra

Picture of Modified Kundalini Yoga Crow Pose



Picture of Kundalini Yoga Crow Pose



Kundalini Yoga Crow Pose Practice Details:

a. *Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Crow Pose:*

- Squat on the floor with legs shoulder width apart and feet flat on the ground with the toes pointing outward.
- Reach forward with your arms and have your index finger pointing forward, while the other fingers are interlaced.
- Gaze over your extended arms and stare out into infinity.
- Keep your back straight and begin [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#).

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Crow Pose:*

- 15 Seconds - 3 minutes.
- Start slowly and build up your time steadily from there.

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Crow Pose:*

- Opens and clears the root chakra bestowing great sense of security, connectivity to nature, good health, fit body, proper perspective on diet, ample wealth and clear practical, down-to-earth thinking.
- Balancing the root chakra also helps remove fears.
- Balances and heals the heart chakra, allowing love and compassion to flow.

- Increases flexibility in the groin and hips.
- Good for the health of the knee joints and ankle joints.
- Very good for toning and healing the elimination system of the body.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Crow Pose:*

- Use the modified version illustrated above. You can also place a rolled up blanket or hard cushion under your heels to help you with this posture.
- Be careful with your knees and only go as far down as comfortable, regardless of whether you are doing the modified posture or the full pose.
- If Breath of Fire is too much, then switch to long deep breathing or normal breathing which continuing to hold the pose.
- Feel your heart center expanding as you reach forward and stare out over your hands into infinity.

Shoulder Stand for Brain Fitness

(Benefits Chakra 5):

This yoga asana (posture) is our first inverted pose and it is about as inverted as you should go according to kundalini yoga. In hatha yoga, the inversion is taken one step further, in headstand (Sirsh Asana), but kundalini yoga stops at shoulder stand (Sarvanga Asana). So this pose is another one which has been adopted by these 2 great schools of yoga, and thus, it is a part of both the [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Poses E-book](#) as well as the [Free Hatha Yoga Poses Photo Galleries](#).

Shoulder stand has a long list of benefits, not the least of which is the additional flow of nutrient rich blood to the brain region, to enhance brain fitness and health. Needless to say, this pose should be approached with caution and the posture should not be forced in any way.

Below you will find an illustration of shoulder stand. The variation to this pose is not having the legs vertical, but instead they are leaning more towards the floor (not over your head though).

Hatha Yoga Shoulder Stand Pose for Brain Health

Picture of Hatha Yoga Shoulder Stand Pose



Hatha Yoga Shoulder Stand Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Hatha Yoga Shoulder Stand Pose:

- Lie flat on your back.
- Curl up your legs and lift yourself up onto your shoulders, with your hands supporting your lower torso as shown.
- Extend your legs up straight into the air and point your toes.

- Work your self into as much of a vertical position as possible, keeping the torso and legs aligned.
- In the final position, have your chin pressed into your chest as you reach up with your body and legs.
- Begin long deep breathing, to help oxygenate and enrich the blood.
- Once in position, close your eyes and let the asana do it's magic.

b. *Duration for Hatha Yoga Shoulder Stand Pose:*

- 15 Seconds - 5 minutes.
- Start slowly and build up your time steadily from there.

c. *Benefits of Hatha Yoga Shoulder Stand Pose:*

- Excellent yoga pose for nourishing the brain with oxygen rich blood to help it remain healthy and fresh.
- The asana also reverses the affect which gravity has on the organs and helps the inner systems realign themselves.
- Helps drain and remove stagnant blood from the extremities.
- The pressure in the neck region massages all the nerves and subtle channels, again promoting improved brain fitness by ensuring better flow to this important region. In addition the thyroid and parathyroid glands are massaged and toned, improving the functioning of the endocrine system.

- Helps counteract varicose veins.
- Pacifies the mind and induces peacefulness.
- Helps boost the immune system, as well as overall health and wellbeing.

d. *Practice Tips for Hatha Yoga Shoulder Stand Pose:*

- Careful with your neck. Very important to not over strain this delicate region. So only straighten as much as you are comfortable doing. Don't fall over.
- If you can't get all the way vertical, that is fine. Just straighten as far as you can and slowly improve the posture over time.
- Strong abdominal muscles will help you master this pose.
- Don't do this asana excessively. One time per day is more than enough and I don't recommend it for more than 5 minutes max.

Modified Wheel Pose for Flexibility and Digestion

(Benefits Chakras 2 thru 5):

Kundalini Yoga's Modified Wheel Pose is certainly an exercise worth including as part of your daily yoga routine. It is an integral part of mine. This exercise is called Kandhar Asana in Hatha Yoga and also goes by a few other names in various yoga circles. Since it is often used as a modification to Wheel Pose (see [Advanced Yoga Technique for Total Body Workout](#)), and offers many of that position's benefits without the same degree of difficulty, I find the name Modified Wheel Pose most suitable for it.

Modified Wheel Pose, as mentioned above, is part of both Kundalini Yoga and Hatha Yoga and so here on [Mastery of Meditation & Yoga](#), it will be part of the following 2 free online e-books: [Free Hatha Yoga Poses](#) & [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#).

One of the best aspects of Kundalini Yoga, and yoga practice in general, is the vast array of modifications that poses offer, so that almost all of us can do some variation of the posture and still enjoy many of the benefits that the exercise bestows. Modified Wheel Pose is a perfect example of this. Not only is it a modification of Full Wheel Pose, but it also has a modified version for those who are just beginning yoga and find the posture hard to come into.

Below I have given illustrations of both, the modified version of Modified Wheel Pose 😊 and the full version of Modified Wheel Pose. This yoga exercise offers many important benefits, such as increasing flexibility, promoting better digestion and toning female reproductive organs for improved function, and I discuss these in more details in the practice section below.

Kundalini Yoga Modified Wheel Pose

Illustration #1 Modification of Modified Wheel Pose



Illustration #2 Kundalini Yoga Modified Wheel Pose



Kundalini Yoga Modified Wheel Pose:

a. Instructions for practicing Kundalini Yoga Modified Wheel Pose:

- Start by lying on your back. Have your feet hip distance apart and bring your heels up against your buttocks.
- Reach forward with your arms and grasp your ankles.
- Now raise your torso off the ground by pushing up with your navel and hips. You should feel a stretch in your upper thighs and in your back and spine.
- Try to stretch up such that your chest nears your chin and you feel a good stretch in your lower back. Continue to hold your ankles throughout and keep the feet flat on the floor.
- Hold this position. In the Kundalini Yoga version the eyes are closed (Illustration #2 above). You can have them open or closed in the Hatha Yoga version.
- Once you come into the final posture, either do Long Deep Breathing, or do [Kundalini Yoga Breath of Fire](#).

b. Duration for Kundalini Yoga Modified Wheel Pose:

- 15 seconds - 5 minutes.

c. Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Modified Wheel Pose:

- Excellent to build and increase flexibility of your back and spine.

- Also promotes flexibility in your shoulders and upper thighs.
- Stretches the entire abdominal region and helps improve your digestive system.
- Stretches the female reproductive organs, massaging and toning them. Improves conditions related to these organs.
- Strengthens your legs and thighs.
- Expands your respiratory system and improves lung capacity.
- Activates and help heal the Vishuddhi Chakra (Throat Charka) and promotes healthy thyroid function.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Modified Wheel Pose:*

- **Modified Version of Modified Wheel Pose:**

If you find the full version of Modified Wheel Pose too difficult, I suggest starting with the modification to this exercise which is demonstrated in illustration #1 above. In this modification, interlace your fingers as shown and push down against the floor with your arms as you thrust up with your hips and navel. All else is the same as the full version, except that you don't grasp your ankles in the modified version. This modified version will also bestow many of the same benefits and you can use it to slowly increase your flexibility and strength, until you can do the full version.

- Be careful of you back, knees and neck when doing this pose. Remember to not strain too much and slowly build up the pose to the full version. Also, increase your time gradually and you can take breaks in between as well.

Power Yoga Elbow Platform

(Benefits Chakras 3 & 4):

For the power yoga fans who have been enjoying the high powered sets such as [Core Abdominal Power Yoga Exercises](#) and the [Yoga for Full Body Fitness](#), here is an advanced yoga pose that is sure to challenge and test you as well. Of course, if you are a beginner yogi looking to learn yoga or if you are looking for more gentle yoga sets, you will find plenty of those on Mastery of Meditation and Yoga as well, such as the [Yoga Poses for Beginners Set](#) and the [Kundalini Yoga Best Beginner's Yoga Set](#), to name a few.

The following power yoga pose, Elbow Platform, comes from the timeless school of Kundalini Yoga and is designed to help you build grit and willpower. Along the way to developing these and other intangible assets, the pose will also of course strengthen your body and muscles. Specifically, it will work on your hamstrings, back, abs, buttocks and arms, more on these benefits in the practice section below.

Although the basic version of this pose should be sufficient to challenge most yoga enthusiasts, I have also provided an advanced version of this advanced pose, for the real power yoga fanatics 😊. Needless to say, please be careful when coming into this pose, and don't hold it for longer that you feel comfortable. This posture is part of Kundalini Yoga Warrior's Kriya, which I will upload in the future. It can also be integrated into your routine as per your needs.

Below you will find illustrations of this power yoga pose and complete practice details. Please also follow the guidelines on how to practice yoga which I have detailed in the following 2 articles, [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#) and [Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#).

Power Yoga's Elbow Platform Pose

Illustration #1 Elbow Platform Pose Basic



Illustration #2 Elbow Platform Pose Advanced - Left Leg



Illustration #3 Elbow Platform Pose Advanced - Right Leg



Power Yoga Pose - Elbow Platform:

a. Instructions for practicing Elbow Platform:

- Come into the position as indicated by Illustration #1. Essentially you are going to support your entire body with just your elbows and heels. No other parts of the body should be touching the mat. The toes should be extended and the entire body should be kept straight. The eyes can be either closed or if kept open, they should be focused on your toes.
- While doing this yoga pose, you should be doing powerful [Breath of Fire Breathing exercise](#), to reap the full benefits of this posture.
- In the advanced version of this power yoga pose, you are going to raise one leg about 12 to 18 inches above the ground, so you will then only be holding yourself up with your elbows and 1 heel (Illustration #2 and Illustration #3). Do one leg at a time (unless you have mastered elevation 😊). Start with your left

and then switch to the right. Keep the toes pointed throughout and your body straight.

b. *Duration for Power Yoga Elbow Platform Pose:*

- 15 seconds - 3 minutes. If you are doing the advanced version, split the time between each leg. Again, don't push too hard, remember that as the muscles tire, the chance of injury rises.

c. *Benefits of Power Yoga Elbow Platform Pose:*

- Excellent exercise to strength the upper and lower body simultaneously. Good for shoulders, triceps, back, abs, hamstrings, buttocks and calves.
- Great for building willpower and grit. This exercise builds character and the ability to overcome challenges and obstacles in life.
- Good for your nervous system.

d. *Practice Tips for Power Yoga Elbow Platform Pose:*

- It is important to do some warm-ups before attempting this pose. Specially warm-up your back, hamstrings and shoulders.
- Use the Breath of Fire to carry you through as you become more proficient at this pose. Forget about the body and mind, and just breathe powerfully.

[Yoga Boat Pose for Firm Toned Abs](#)

(Benefits Chakra 3):

Today I want to illustrate and detail for you one of the best yoga exercise to help you tone your stomach muscles and get great firm abs. In fact, this particular exercise might just be the single best exercise from the world of health and fitness to work on your abs. It is such a potent pose that in Kundalini Yoga it is considered a Kriya in and of itself and called Maha Shakti Kriya (Great Strength / Power / Energy Set), and this is also a key Hatha Yoga pose, and there it is called Nau Asana or Boat Pose.

As I have mentioned in the past, varying your workout routine is a key element in abdominal and other muscle training, and to help you do that there are several excellent ab exercises and sets already on the website. Here is a quick list of these resources for you, which will give you plenty of ways to introduce variations in your workout. Rest assured, I will continue to add more exercises and sets to help you target your abs and core muscles in a variety of ways in the future.

[Yoga Workouts for Toned Firm Abs:](#)

[Stretch Pose for Abdominal Strength](#)

[Core Abdominal Power Yoga Set](#) (This set uses Boat Pose)

[Excellent Yoga Workout to Shape and Tone Stomach](#)

[Yoga Exercise for Great Toned Abs:](#)

Boat Pose, along with Stretch Pose, I believe are great exercises to benchmark the fitness level of your abs. So even if you switch to other abdominal workouts, you can do either of these 2 poses from time to time to measure the progress you are making with your core

strength and power. Stretch Pose is a little more basic, while Boat Pose is more advanced. In addition, if you are doing a yoga set where you are not getting enough abdominal work, I suggest adding Boat Pose to your routine, generally at the end, to ensure you get your work in for this key region.

Below you will find illustrations of this great ab exercise and done regularly I am sure it will help you tone your abs and give you a firm, flat stomach. Please also follow the guidelines on how to practice yoga which I have detailed in the following 2 articles, [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#) and [Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#).

Boat Pose for Firm Toned Abs

Illustration #1 Yoga Boat Pose for Rock Solid Abs



Illustration #2 Yoga Boat Pose for Rock Solid Abs



Yoga Boat Pose (Maha Shakti Kriya or Nauk Asana)

a. Instructions for Yoga Boat Pose for Rock Solid Abs:

- Lie flat on your back.
- Have your arms straight out to the sides with your palms facing in. Keep your legs together and straight out as well with your toes pointing forward.
- Now bring your legs and torso up such that you are balancing on your sacrum. Keep your eyes focused on your toes, this will help you keep your balance. You are forming a V shape, with

your legs and torso.

- Begin the [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#) and continue on for as long as you can.

b. Duration for Yoga Boat Pose:

- 15 seconds - 11 minutes

c. Benefits of Yoga Boat Pose:

- Builds your Navel Center and firms and tones your abdominal muscles.
- Activates and balances the Manipura Chakra.
- Builds willpower and strength of character.
- Awakens all the systems in the body (digestive, nervous, endocrine, circulatory, etc.).
- Develops core energy and Vitality.
- Develops focus and balance.

d. Practice Tips for Yoga Boat Pose:

- To modify the exercise hold on to your knees or thighs. This is a good way for beginners to start.
- Keeping a steady gaze upon your toes will go a long way in helping you keep your balance.

- If you need to, you can take a break and then come into the pose again once you are ready. Generally I will do this exercise 3 times with breaks in between.
- You can build up the time for Maha Shakti Kriya to 11 minutes. This will give you rock solid abs like Bruce Lee, who often practiced this very exercise 😊.

[Yoga Ab Crunches for Six Pack Abs](#)

(These Poses Primarily Benefit Chakra 3):

If you are interested in developing your abs, whether to get a toned six pack or to enjoy the energy and willpower developing this center gives. The following articles are some excellent yoga crunches for you to do. If you have been following this blog for some time, you will certainly have come across some potent ab exercises and sets already such as the, [Core Abdominal Power Yoga Set](#) and the [Terrific Yoga Ab Exercises and Workout for Shaping Stomach](#), but I feel that when it comes to developing your abdominal muscles and core strength, variety is always very useful.

The ab crunches I am going to detail for you in this article are not the easiest to do. But, if you have been doing your daily yoga workouts, then you should be ready for these challenging exercises. If you are new to yoga or just getting back to getting fit, not to worry there are plenty of other ab exercises on the website for you to start with.

So, if you are looking for something a little easier then please try [Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose for Core Abdominal Power](#). That is a good exercise to start training your ab with, and has some nice modifications for beginners. Also, at the end of this article I list a few more ab exercises that you might want to try which are great for helping you develop those six packs or balancing your Navel Center.

I call these particular exercises, Yoga Ab Crunches, and many different types of yoga use these movements. As always, please follow the guidelines for yoga I have laid out in the following documents...

[Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#)

[Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)

Illustrations for Yoga Ab Crunches



Illustration #1 - Ab Crunches Starting Position



Illustration #2 - Ab Crunches Ending Positions - Variation 1

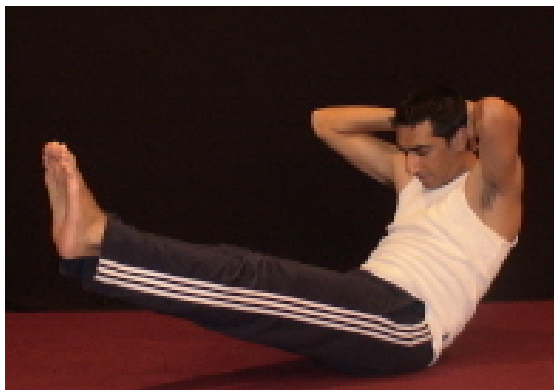


Illustration #3 - Ab Crunches Ending Positions - Variation 2

Abdominal Crunches for Six Pack Abs:

A. How to Do Yoga Ab Crunches:

- Lie on your back, interlace your fingers and place your hands at the back of your head as shown in Illustration #1 above. This is the starting position.
- For variation #1 above, in a smooth motion raise your torso up to 90 degrees and press your chest forward. Exhale as you come up and then Inhale as you return to the starting position. This completes 1 crunch. Keep going and try to isolate and use your abs muscles to pull yourself up.
- For variation #2, you are going to work your lower abs and your upper abs at the same time. In this case, as you raise your body up, also bring your legs up and off the floor as far up as you can. The end position is shown in Illustration #3 above. Again inhale as you crunch up and exhale as you lie back down. Keep going.
- Both exercises above will give your stomach muscles a great workout, and are great for developing the core center as well as getting six pack abs.

B. Duration for Yoga Ab Exercises:

- 15 seconds - 11 minutes.

C. Benefits of Ab Exercises:

- Excellent exercises for developing six pack abs and strengthening your core.

- Balances and awakens the Navel Center (Manipura Chakra).
- Build willpower and strength of character.
- Strengthens the lower back and hip flexors.
- Increases energy and gives vitality and vigor.

D. Practice Tips and Cautions for Yoga Ab Crunches:

- Don't over strain. These crunches are not the easiest to do, so if can't do them yet, follow the suggestions I gave above for easier ab exercises and try these later once you are stronger.
- These crunches can be incorporated into other abdominal sets. Add them in towards the end.
- It is perfectly fine to do take breaks in between repetitions. Just lie on your back when you do and relax, until you are ready to go again.
- Squeeze your abs to max out the workout, when you bring legs and body up for variation number 2. This will really give you a great burn.

Yoga Wheel Pose

(Benefits Chakras 2 through 4):

Wheel pose is a fairly advanced yoga technique that should only be tried after perfecting some of the preliminary postures for building the flexibility of the spine. It is not recommended you do this posture if you find it strenuous on your wrists, elbows, shoulders, spine or knees. So in other words, this is a great yoga technique, but don't do it till you are good and ready.

This advanced yoga technique though, if you can do it, is very good for toning your entire body and is beneficial to multiple internal systems simultaneously. More details on the benefits of this pose can be found in the practice section below the illustration.

Advanced Yoga Technique for Total Body Workout

Picture of Hatha Yoga Wheel Pose



Hatha Yoga Wheel Pose Practice Details:

a. *Step-by-Step Instructions for Hatha Yoga Wheel Technique:*

- Lie on your back and bring your feet very close to your buttocks.
- Place your hands near your shoulders, with your fingers facing in.
- Raise yourself up, so you are resting on the crown of your head.
- From here, press upwards, such that you come into the position as illustrated by the picture above. You should try to get a good arch in your back by pressing up with your hips and let your head hang down between your arms.

b. *Duration for Hatha Yoga Wheel Technique:*

- 15 seconds - 3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Hatha Yoga Wheel Technique:*

- Excellent yoga technique to tone your respiratory system, digestive system, reproductive system and your nervous system. Great for a total body workout.
- This yoga pose also builds arm strength and leg strength.
- It promotes flexibility in the spine and shoulders.

d. *Practice Tips for Hatha Yoga Wheel Technique:*

- Practice partial wheel pose, with your head resting on the ground first, and then move into the full posture when you feel ready.

- Do other simpler backward bending exercises first, to build up the flexibility of your spine, before attempting Chakra Asana.
- Make sure you are properly warmed up before doing this advanced pose to help prevent injury.

[Yoga Plow Pose for Multi-Chakra Activation](#)

(Benefits Chakras 3 through 5):

Plow pose (Hal Asana) is another yoga posture which is slightly more advanced and should therefore be practiced carefully. As this position puts pressure on the neck, it is important to not force the pose and to gently develop the necessary flexibility to come into the final position. This yoga pose though, is certainly worth the time and effort to master, as it is capable of bestowing multiple benefits by working to open several key chakras simultaneously.

The following pose is again common to both, hatha yoga and kundalini yoga and thus, is a part of both e-books that are available on Mastery of Meditation. The [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses Galleries](#) and the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses E-Book](#).

As mentioned above, Plow pose works on several of the chakras of the Kundalini Seven Chakra System. Some articles that will help you understand better this chakra system and how kundalini yoga looks to open and balance them are as follows: [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga](#) and [Kundalini Seven Chakra System Overview](#). It is also important to note, that hatha yoga, or for that matter all yoga, looks to open and balance the chakras to promote the greater flow of kundalini shakti throughout the nadi system (psychic channels of the energetic body).

Specifically, Plow pose works on the throat chakra (vishuddhi chakra), heart chakra (anahata chakra) and the navel chakra (manipura chakra). More details about these benefits are in the practice section below.

Yoga Plow Pose for Multi Chakra Activation

Picture of Yoga Plow Pose (Hal Asana)



Hatha Yoga Plow Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Plow Pose:

- Lie on your back, bend your legs and bring your knees above you.
- Use your hands to support your back by placing them on ribcage, as show in the illustration above.
- Straighten your legs and keeping them together slowly swing them over till your toes touch the floor behind you.
- Try to stay on your upper back (instead of your shoulders) and keep your legs as straight as possible.

b. Duration for Kundalini Yoga Plow Pose:

15 seconds - 5 minutes.

c. Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Plow Pose:

- Works on your navel chakra and improves the functioning of all your digestive organs. This asana also develops the abdominal muscles.
- This pose also stimulates the heart chakra and improves the respiratory, circulatory and immune systems.
- Tones the thyroid and para-thyroid glands, and helps activate and balance the throat chakra.
- Plow pose develops flexibility of the spine, entire back and hamstrings.

d. Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Plow Pose:

- Do not practice this pose if you have problems with your back or neck. It is also not recommended for those suffering from high blood pressure.
- To modify this exercise, keep a small chair or low table behind you to rest your toes on, if you can't reach the floor with them. It is also fine, to only bring your legs over as far as possible and to bend your knees if necessary, until you are flexible enough to do the full posture.
- One should stretch the neck, shoulders, back and hamstrings prior to doing Hal Asana.
- Do not force this pose and be careful of your neck as you bring your legs over.

[Crane Pose for Strength and Balance](#)

(Benefits Chakras 3 & 4):

What I would like to do today is start to expand our popular [Online Hatha Yoga Poses](#) book, and add to it some poses that are slightly more challenging and advanced. The pose that will be the next entry of this book is Hatha Yoga's Crane Pose. This pose, as you will see below, requires quite a bit of strength and balance to do, but is a pose that I find quite a bit of fun to practice.

As I was writing this article, my wife just phoned me from the parking lot and asked me to look out of the window. Unbelievably, walking around outside are 2 magnificent looking cranes! Nature is having some fun with me today 😊.

The first thing to do before trying this pose is putting a nice big soft cushion below your face so that if you topple over you don't end up breaking your nose. Now that we have that out of the way, the rest of the pose depends a great deal on your arm strength, balance and coordination. What you will tend to find with this pose, is that once you are able to come into the posture, holding it for longer periods of time is where the challenge really lies. Again, as with all yoga, make sure you warm up before doing such challenging poses, and don't over strain.

Our [Free Online Hatha Yoga Book](#) now has 22 excellent poses and Crane Pose will be pose 23 of this book. As this pose is also used in Kundalini Yoga it will also be a part of the [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#) e-book, where you will find a large collection of kundalini yoga poses and exercises, fully illustrated and detailed. Please also follow the guidelines on how to practice yoga, which I have detailed in the following 2 articles, [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#) and [Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#). Also, be on the lookout for

more [free online yoga classes](#) which are going to incorporate sets which use this challenging pose in the very near future.

Hatha Yoga Book Pose 23 - Crane Pose

Illustration of Crane Pose



Hatha Yoga's Baka Dhyana Asana - Crane Pose:

A. Basic Instructions for Hatha Yoga Crane Pose:

- Squat down, come up on your toes and place your hands onto the floor in front of you about shoulder width apart with fingers pointing forward.
- Making sure your elbows are slightly bent, bring your knees up to the outside of the elbows and lean forward slowly. Your knees will be resting on your arms.
- Continue to lean forward until you have raised your toes off the ground and are balancing on just your hands as shown in the illustration above. Make sure you lean forward slowly to avoid toppling over.

- Keep your eyes open and either focus on a point under you to help you keep your balance, or focus on the tip of your nose.
- Hold this position, with normal breathing or do [Breath of Fire](#) while holding this pose.
- Lower your feet to the ground once you are done.
- Again, don't forget to place a cushion in front of your face before trying this pose, to protect you in case you topple over.

B. Duration for Hatha Yoga Crane Pose:

- 5 seconds - 3 mins

C. Benefits of Hatha Yoga Crane Pose:

- Excellent for strengthening your arms, shoulders and wrists.
- Helps you develop balance and coordination.
- Develops mental focus and concentration.
- Calms the mind.
- Improves and strengthens the entire nervous system.

D. Practice Tips and Cautions for Hatha Yoga Crane Pose:

- As this pose increases blood flow and puts pressure on the heart, you should be cautious if you have high blood pressure or major cardiovascular issues.

- You can do this pose in segments, where you come into it for a few seconds, then take a break and repeat the posture once you are ready.

Other great exercises from the Online Hatha Yoga Book which are great for developing your arm strength and balance are the following. Start with some of the easier ones below to build up your strength if you are finding Crane Pose too difficult.

[Yoga Plank Pose for Strong Arms](#)

[Hatha Yoga Mountain Position](#)

[Simple Yoga for Upper Body Training](#)

[Basic Yoga Pose for Balance](#)

[Kundalini Yoga Lotus Pose](#)

(Benefits Chakra 2):

The last yoga pose we added to our free [Online Hatha Yoga Poses](#) book, Crane Pose, required considerable balance and strength to do, and today's addition is similar in that it requires a great deal of balance as well, but unlike Crane pose, this one needs flexibility more than strength. It is the scary looking White Tantra Yoga Lotus Pose 😊, and as I mentioned, since we are now adding some more advanced postures to our collection, please follow the safety guidelines from the following 2 articles carefully when practicing these postures.

[Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#)

[Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)

Kundalini Yoga, is also known as White Tantra Yoga, and as I have previously pointed out, sexual energy is the most condensed form of physical energy and, if correctly channeled, it can play an important role in one's personal and spiritual evolution. There are many tantric exercises, which help you, harness your sexual potency, and for a complete set of such exercises, you can refer to the [Tantric Yoga Exercises for Sexual Health](#) article. For those interested in the refinement and transmutation of sexual energy for higher purposes, the pose today will be of particular interest. This is because Kundalini Yoga Lotus Pose, is designed specifically for this purpose.

There are other benefits of Lotus Pose, in addition to the channeling of sexual energy, and those are listed below in the practice section as well. Since this position requires quite a bit of flexibility to do, it should not be attempted before doing sufficient warm-ups and stretches. In particular the hamstrings and groin should be stretched and warmed up prior to trying Lotus Pose.

Lotus Pose will focus on opening and balancing your Sex Chakra (Swadhisthan Chakra), and as with all Tantric exercises, your mind can help magnify the benefits of the exercise. For this reason you should concentrate your awareness upon the Sex Chakra while doing this pose and can visualize energy rising up the spine from this region while you practice the position. The following three articles will be useful in helping you understand more about the Sex Chakra and how to add a chakra meditation component to this exercise.

[Kundalini Seven Chakra Overview](#)

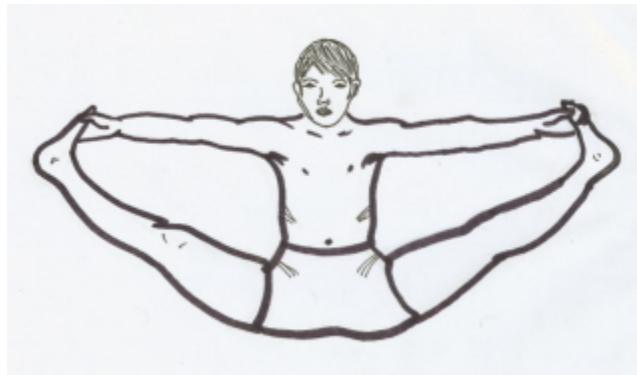
[How to Analyze and Heal Your Chakras](#)

[Top 3 Chakra Meditation Techniques](#)

In addition to being added to the [Free Online Hatha Yoga Book](#), Lotus Pose will of course become part of the [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#) e-book. Also, be on the lookout for more [Free Tantra Yoga Classes](#) which are going to use Lotus Pose in the very near future.

White Tantra Yoga Position - Lotus Pose

Illustration of Lotus Pose



White Tantra Yoga Position - Lotus Pose:

A. How to Do Tantra Yoga Lotus Pose:

- Sit on the floor with your legs bent at the knees in front of you.
- Wrap your index and middle finger around your big toe of each foot.
- Now slowly start to extend your arms and legs, while you balance on your sacrum.
- Try to straighten your legs all the way if you can. Don't force it.
- Keep your eyes open and focus on a point in front of you to help you keep your balance.
- In the final position, you will be leaning back about 30 degrees. Try to keep your back straight.
- Once you come into the position, hold while doing normal breathing or do [Breath of Fire](#).
- Bend your knees and lower your legs to the ground once you are done.
- If you cannot hold your big toe, as indicated above, you can also simply grasp your feet instead.

B. Duration for Tantra Yoga Lotus Pose:

- 5 seconds - 3 mins

C. Benefits of Tantra Yoga Lotus Pose:

- Build sexual potency.
- Opens and balances the Sex Chakra.
- Channels sexual energy up the spine so it can be used by the higher centers.
- Excellent for the digestive system.
- Good for the back and spine.
- Helps detoxify and cleanse the system.

D. Practice Tips and Cautions for Tantra Yoga Lotus Pose:

- As this pose increases blood flow and puts pressure on the heart, you should be cautious if you have high blood pressure or major cardiovascular issues.
- Be careful in doing this pose if you have back or spine problems.
- Be sure to warm-up correctly and not force this position. There are many other good stretches you can do to prepare your body for this pose, so start with the easy ones and only attempt Lotus Position once you have improved your flexibility sufficiently.

Here are some more excellent White Tantra Yoga exercises for opening the Sex Chakra and building sexual potency.

[Tantra Yoga Technique to Raise Sexual Energy](#)

[Tantra Yoga Technique for Sexual Mastery](#)

[Yoga Exercises for Male Sexual Health](#)

[Liver Detox Yoga Sequence](#)

(Pavan Sodhung Kriya)

In this part of our all natural detoxification program, I want to focus on two very important aspects of full body detoxification - liver detox and firing up your digestive system. In part 1 of this series, [Detox Diet Mistakes](#), I not only provided a list of incompatible foods, but also stressed the importance of building your digestive fire in order to prevent the build up of toxins in the first place. Today's article will teach you precisely such a technique, which is excellent for your digestive system and also, has the additional benefit for being a great liver detox technique. Best of all, it is a completely natural way to cleanse the liver.

Natural Liver Detoxification:

Liver detoxification is an absolute must if you want to live a healthy, disease free and long life. The liver is the largest organ in the body, and quite possibly the hardest working as well. Our life style and diet choices often put this organ under immense stress and it is very important to give the liver much deserved love and care from time to time.

The liver is the most important organ for neutralizing toxins in the body and helping the body detox. And although that is one its key functions, the liver has many other important roles as well. It participates in the metabolic process, plays a role in digestion, stores energy, Vitamins and minerals for us, and also plays a role in immune function. The list goes on. So, cleansing and taking good care of your liver is a must. Detox the liver, so it can help you detox your body. You can find more information on this most generous and hard working organ here: [Liver Wiki](#).

Digestive Power:

According to Ayurveda, a strong digestive fire is your best defense against toxins. A digestive system that is functioning well, will prevent the buildup of undigested food mass and also prevent the buildup of toxins. So along with cleansing the liver, improving the digestive system is essential for setting a good foundation for living toxin free. This particular technique, as mentioned above is great for these two purposes and so can play a very key role in any detoxification program.

This particular detox technique, is called Pavan Sodhung Kriya, and will be part of the following 3 free e-books here on Mastery of Meditation, as it is a Kundalini Yoga exercise, a full Kriya, as well as a Hatha Yoga technique: [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#), [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Sets](#) & [Hatha Yoga Poses](#) e-book.

Benefits of Liver Detox Technique (Pavan Sodhung Kriya):

- Excellent technique to Detox and Cleanse the Liver.
- Very good for improving and building the Digestive System.
- Expels gas and helps prevent bloating.
- Cures constipation and other digestive issues.
- Builds the abdominal muscles and tones the stomach (a lot 😊).
- Balances the Navel Chakra.
- Bestows Willpower and Strength of Character.

- Expands the Pranic Body.
- Helps fight deep seated fears, including the fear of death.
- Builds lung capacity.

If you were debating whether or not to include this kriya in your detox program, that list above should put any indecision to rest 😊.

Natural Liver Detox Illustrations



Natural Liver Detox Illustration #1



Natural Liver Detox Illustration #2



Natural Liver Detox Illustration #3

Liver Detox Technique Cautions:

- Although this is a completely natural way of detoxifying the liver, some caution is required since the technique using breath retention (on inhale and exhale).
- Do not hold your breath longer than you are comfortable doing so. Build up your capacity slowly over time. Start with just a few seconds and then go from there. This applies to any technique which using breath retention.
- Be careful of your lower back and use the modification I have shown to support it while doing this practice as well (placing the hands underneath the buttocks).

Liver Detox Technique Practice Details:

- Lie on your back and close your eyes. Place your hands, palms facing down, underneath your buttocks to support your lower back as I have demonstration in illustration # 1.

- Now inhale deeply, hold your breath as you raise your legs to 60 degrees as I have shown in illustration #2. As I mentioned, start with just a few seconds and build up to 15 seconds if you can. So hold this position with your breath held in for as long as comfortable (up to 15 seconds).
- Now exhale as you bring your knees in towards your chest as I have shown in illustration #3. Hold this position, with breath held out for up to 15 seconds.
- Now return to the position in illustration #2 as you inhale. Again hold it for up to 15 seconds with your breath held in. If it starts to feel tough, remember how happy your liver is that you are doing this, and how much better you will feel after you detox your system.
- Finally, lower your legs and return to the starting position as you exhale. Now remain in this position for up to 15 seconds with your breath held out.
- Next inhale and move back to illustration #2, and hold for 15 seconds, and continue to repeat this cycle for the duration of the time.

Liver Detox Technique Tips:

- I mentioned in the benefits section that this technique can help you fight fears, and that is essentially the result of the breath retention aspects of this exercise. Once you start to get more confident, you can elongate those breath retention periods, and try to stay calm as you feel panicky during these periods. This applies primarily to when you have your breath held out.

Natural Liver Detox Summary:

Making Pavan Sodhung Kriya a part of your practice from time to time, is really a great way to keep toxins away and cleanse your liver and body. This sequence is so good that it is considered an entire set all on it's own. If you really want to detox your liver, build your digestive system and get six pack abs, you can build up to 31 minutes straight. I would suggest though to start with about 3 minutes and then go from there.

Time to show your liver some love, after all the love it has shown you 😊.

[Yoga Exercises for Male Sexual Health](#)

Yoga Therapy for Sexual Dysfunction

[Kundalini Yoga](#) is considered the ultimate householder's yoga. Which means virility and sexual energy are not suppressed, but in fact considered an important aspect of one's health and life. Previously, I have also indicated that sexual energy, which is considered the most potent form of bio-chemical energy in the body, is the one form of energy that can be used for rejuvenating the entire physical apparatus, as well as be used for spiritual growth and transformation; so this energy is certainly important to have in quantity and quality.

The ancient holy men, yogis and rishis (saints) of India were known to maintain their sexual charge and drive right through their life and towards that end, yoga played no small role. This article is going to provide a potent yoga set for men to heal any sexual dysfunction, increase their sexual potency and refine their sexual energy, so it can be utilized for spiritual transformation. Although this yoga set is excellent for women as well and can be done by them also, it is tailored specifically for men and the male sexual system.

The Yoga Exercises in this set are all linked and detailed in the [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises E-book](#) and the [Free Illustrated Hatha Yoga Poses E-book](#), where you can get all the details, cautions, modifications, etc. This set will also make up Chapter 13 of our popular [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Sets E-book](#). Soon it will also be a part of the [Free Online Yoga & Meditation Classes](#) held here on [Mastery of Meditation & Yoga](#).

Benefits of Yoga Exercises for Male Sexual Health:

Below are the benefits of this yoga set:

- Helps raise the vibration of sexual energy, so it can be used for healing and spiritual transformation.
- Helps develop sexual potency and improves sex drive.
- Helps cure sexual dysfunction and sexual phobias.
- Helps cure erectile dysfunction.
- Increases your overall level of energy and Vitality.
- Significantly develops lower body strength and flexibility.
- Tones legs and buttocks.
- Awakens, heals and balances the Sex Chakra.

Yoga Exercises for Male Sexual Health Preparation:

The following two articles are important to read as they provide guidelines on how to practice yoga intelligently and safely:

[Essential Beginners Guide to Yoga Practice](#)

[10 Important Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)

Remember the golden rule is do not overdo or over strain. Especially if you are new to yoga, please use the beginner's version for the difficult exercises and back off if you feel uncomfortable or dizzy. Each exercise title is a link to the chapter with the details for that exercise. For all the poses in this set illustrations have also been provided.

You will also need to learn the Breath of Fire breathing exercise, which is taught in the following video: [Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama](#). This breathing exercise is a fundamental breathing technique in Kundalini Yoga and is used in conjunction with the yoga poses in the set below. If at any time you feel it is difficult to keep up with breath of fire during the exercise, please switch to long deep breathing or normal breathing instead.

Male Sexual Health Yoga Set:

Remember that each title is a link to the article with full details on each pose. Also, in each of those respective articles, modifications for beginners are also given, so make sure you use those modifications as you start out.

1. [Kundalini Yoga Butterfly Pose:](#)

- Kundalini yoga pose to stretch the sexual meridians.
- Duration: 1 - 3 mins.
- Breath: Breath of Fire.



Butterfly Pose for Stretch Sex Meridians

2. Yoga Cobra Pose:

- Cobra Pose to balance and heal the Sex Chakra. If your arms get tired, come down from cobra and then go back into the pose after recovering.
- Duration: 30 seconds - 3 mins.
- Breath: Long Deep Breathing.



Cobra Pose for Healing Sex Chakra

3. Forward Stretch Pose for Navel Chakra:

- This is an excellent pose for healing the nervous system and promoting good health. Start the stretch slowly and as your body opens up, accentuate the stretch further.
- Duration: 1 - 3 mins.
- Breath: Breath of Fire or Long Deep Breathing.



Forward Bend for Health and Healing

4. Yoga Modified Wheel Pose:

- The modified version of this pose (bridge pose) will also provide you with the necessary benefits, so if cannot reach your ankles, feel free to use the modified version.
- Duration: 1 - 3 mins.
- Breath: Breath of Fire.



Modified Wheel Pose to Tone Sexual Organs

5. Yoga Plow Pose for Sexual Excellence:

- First off, please develop your capacity to do this pose slowly and gently. Careful with your neck and do not over strain.

Improving the flexibility in your hamstrings will help you with doing this pose as well. This pose is absolutely excellent to improve your sexual systems.

- Duration: 1 - 3 mins.
- Breath: Long deep breathing.



Plow Pose for Sexual Healing

6. Yoga Rock-n-Roll:

- Good Posture to help distribute the energy you have generated.
- Duration: 30 seconds - 1 min
- Breath: Normal.



Yoga Rock-n-Roll

7. Yoga Chair Pose for Sexual Health:

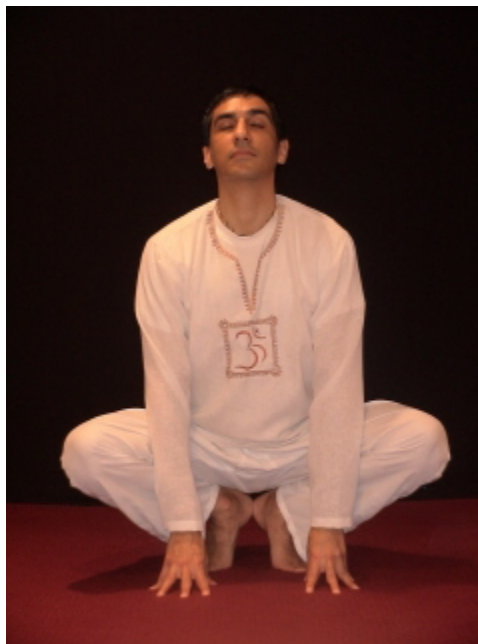
- We now get to the exercises which really start to work the lower body and legs, which are the source of a great deal of the sexual power and energy. Be careful with your knees for the following two exercises. Remember, you can see more illustrations and details in the article linked by the title as well. Take breaks in between if you need to.
- Duration: 15 seconds - 3 mins
- Breath: Breath of Fire.



Yoga Chair Pose for Sexual Health

8. [Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose](#):

- These can be a little tough for beginner's to do, but are excellent to tone and strengthen your legs and also, it will give your heart a good workout. Do only a few at a time in the beginning and take breaks between repetitions as you build up your capacity. Build up slowly to 52 in a row over time.
- Duration: 11 - 52 repetitions
- Breath: Inhale Down / Exhale Up.



Yoga Frog Pose (Inhale)



Yoga Frog Pose (Exhale)

9. Kundalini Yoga Sat Kriya for Sex Chakra:

- This is a very powerful tantra yoga technique to raise the vibration of your sexual energy. It also helps remove sexual phobias and cures sexual dysfunctions. Make sure you don't overdo this exercise and build up your capacity slowly over time.
- Duration: 1 - 11 mins.
- Breath: As given in the exercise.



Sat Kriya for Healing Sex Chakra

10. Corpse Pose:

- Once you have completed the Yoga Set for Men's Sexual Health, make sure you relax on your back in corpse pose. For corpse pose just lie comfortably on your back and have your hands out to the sides or on your chest. Just let go during this time and let the Universe take care of you. Have no worries, anxieties or goals, and simply surrender to Infinity. The longer you do Sat Kriya above, the longer you need to rest as well.
- Duration: 3 - 11 mins.
- Breath: Relaxed

Trust in the wisdom of this science and do your practice consistently. There is no reason why you will not be able to cure your conditions and improve your sexual health and stamina. Enjoy 😊...

[Yoga Exercises for Eye Care](#)

Yoga Set for Vision

A few readers have requested yoga exercises that would be helpful to them for general care of their vision and eye problems, and yoga certainly has some nice recommendations for that. The set below is a simple, yet effective set, to help you gently improve your vision or maintain the good health of your eyes.

This set will be Chapter 8 of the [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Sets E-book](#), where each chapter is a unique set to help you with a particular dimension of your being. The free e-book includes sets such as the [Fountain of Youth Yoga Set](#), the [Healthy Weight Loss Yoga Exercises](#) and the [Beginners Kundalini Yoga Series](#).

Background of Yoga Exercises for Eye Care:

The yoga set is quick to do and can be easily done anytime you have a few free minutes to spare. If you have more time you can repeat this set more than once if you like.

Benefits of Yoga Exercises for Eye Care:

- Helps improve vision.
- Helps improve focus.
- Helps strengthen the eye muscles.
- Helps coordination between both eyes.
- Helps relax the eyes by relieving tension and stress in the eyes muscles.

Yoga Exercises for Eye Care Set:

- Begin by taking 5 deep breaths and relaxing the muscles in your face and around your eyes.
- Next practice Palming: Palming is done by vigorously rubbing your hand together until your palms get warm and then gently covering your eyes with your palms, allowing the warmth to relax and nourish your eyes. This can be done anytime in between the following exercises, whenever you feel you need to give your eyes a break.
- Blink several times quickly. Relax for a few moments.
- For all the movements below, look without moving your head and count 1 round when you have looked in both the indicated directions.
- Side to Side Movement: Look side to side, left to right, without moving your head 5 times.
- Up and Down Movement: Look up and down 5 times.
- Diagonal Movement: Look from bottom left to upper right 5 times.
- Diagonal Movement: Look from bottom right to upper left 5 times.
- Circular Movement: Move your eyes clockwise in a big circle 5 times.

- Circular Movement: Move your eyes counter-clockwise in a big circle 5 times.
- Nose Tip Focus: Hold your right arm out with your thumb up. Now focus on your thumb tip as you bring it slowly towards your nose. Upon touching your nose continue to gaze upon your thumb tip for a few moments, and then straighten your arm again, while continuing to focus on your thumb tip. Repeat 5 times.
- Close your eyes, relax and perform palming.

Ardhakati Chakrasana:

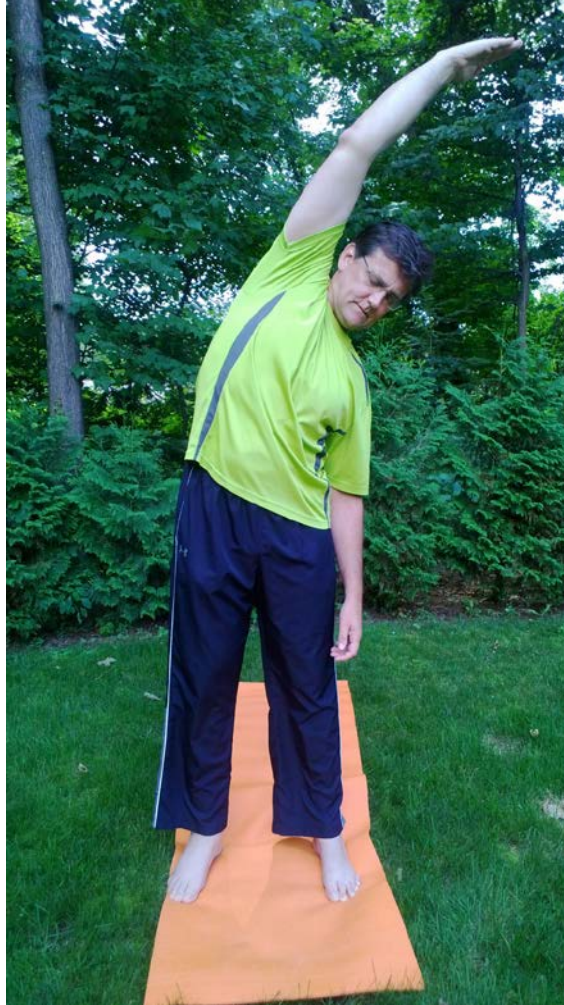
(Benefits Chakras 3 through 5):

Background:

This pose is great to add to your overall yoga practice as the majority of poses require a forward bend or a backward bending movement. Ardhakati provides a great side stretch through the lateral movement of the spine. This pose massages and rejuvenates the spine while stretching the lateral and oblique muscles, and, the supporting muscles in the rib cage area.

Performing Ardhakati Chakrasana:

- Relax.
- Begin by standing with the feet about six to 12 inches apart.
- While facing forward with eyes closed, raise the right arm straight into the air above you with the palm facing inward toward you.
- Slowly bend the arm in an arc towards but above the body.
- Keep the knees straight and your weight evenly on both feet.
- As you bend further, feel the stretch in the right side of your body, notice the feeling in you and stop before the stretch becomes intense, stay only within a range of movement that is comfortable.
- Hold this pose for 30-60 seconds. Repeat on left side.



Tip on Performing Ardhakati Chakrasana:

Though not readily apparent while bending to one side, this pose also requires a balance between the abdominal and lower back muscles. If you are bending too far forward in this pose, you will feel a strain in your lower back; if too far back you will feel a strain in your abdominals.

Attempt to find a perfect balance between the two areas, this will improve the range of your lateral movement over time and allow you to relax within the pose.

Cautions:

This pose must be relaxed into without force or exceeding your current comfort level as it intensely stretches the entire center of your body. If you suffer from pre-existing back pain, please check with your physician before performing this pose.

Benefits of Ardhakati Chakrasana:

- Keeps the spine flexible.
- Aids the liver and spleen.
- Helps release stomach gas.
- Increases presence and awareness through the attention placed on the lateral/forward/backward portions of the body.
- Aids in relaxing the body and mind.

Ardha Chakrasana:

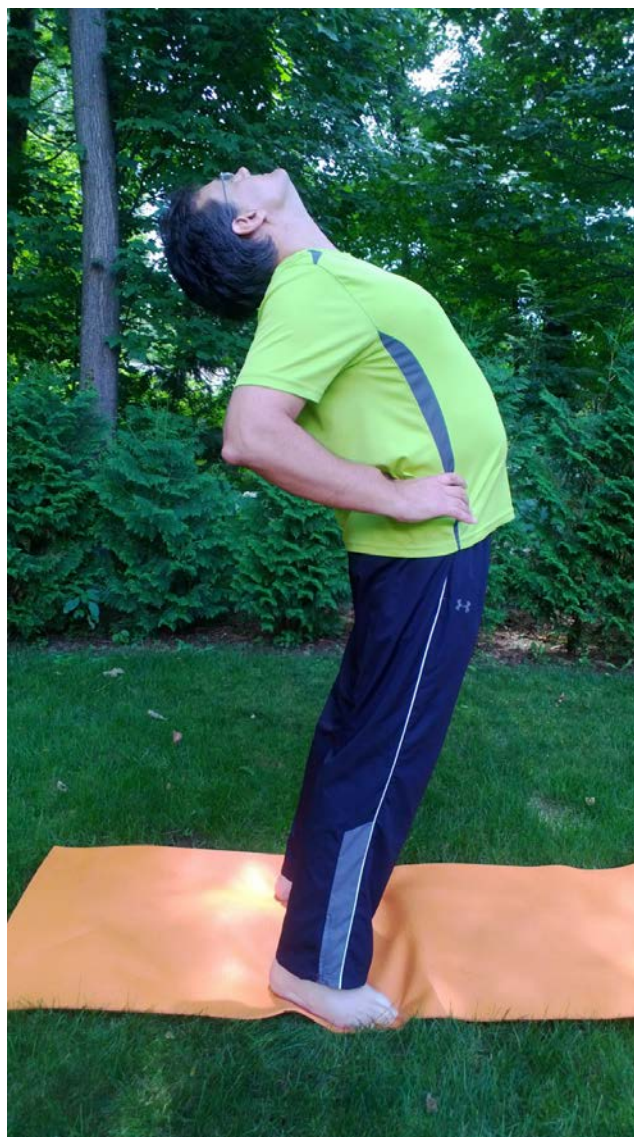
(Benefits Chakras 1 through 7):

Background:

This pose is closely related to Ardhakati Chakrasana. It is an excellent pose to use when compensating for forward bends. The pose is also known to directly activate the seven chakras and stimulate the endocrine glands.

Performing Ardha Chakrasana:

- Relax.
- Begin by standing with the feet about six to 12 inches apart.
- Keeping the eyes open to aid in balance, bring the hands to your waist with your thumbs to the back.
- Lean back as far as comfortable from the lumbar region of the spine using your palms to hold and support your waist (thumbs to rear of body).
- Hold this pose for 30 seconds to three minutes.



Tip on Performing Ardha Chakrasana:

It is important to remember to compensate for backward movement in this pose by pushing forward the hip/groin area. The backward bend places the center of gravity of your body further back and could cause you to tumble backward if not compensated for. Pushing forward the hip area makes the entire body bend into a slight arc rather than being straight from the feet to waist.

Cautions:

This pose must be relaxed into without force or exceeding your current comfort level as it intensely stretches your body, especially the lumbar region of the spine. If you suffer from pre-existing back pain, please check with your physician before performing this pose.

Benefits of Ardha Chakrasana:

- Keeps the spine flexible.
- Helps people with drooping shoulders and hunched backs.
- Tones facial tissues giving you a younger appearance.
- Aids pharynx, nasal passages, lungs and the entire upper respiratory system. Aids in the treatment of asthma.
- Can aid people with voice disorders and mitigate some headaches.
- Elevates mood.

Padahastasana

(Benefits Chakras 1 through 3, 5):

Background:

Padahastasana is a standing pose and excellent for opening up many portions of the body. The legs, hips, back, neck and shoulders are all accessed through this asana.

Performing Padahastasana:

- Relax.
- Begin by standing with the feet together and hands at your sides.
- Inhale and bring the hands out to the sides and then toward the ceiling stretching the spine.
- Exhale and bend from the hip and place your hands on the floor (or as close as possible on your legs without forcing).
- While stretching, concentrate on the spine and attempt to lengthen the back as much as possible, allow yourself to slowly stretch further naturally without effort.
- If possible, slowly bring your hands under your toes at the front of your foot.
- Upon completion of the stretch, stand and bring the hands/arms back to the ceiling stretching the spine as you reach upward.
- Return to a standing position for a few moments.
- Hold this pose for a total of one to five minutes.



Benefits of Padahastasana:

- Keeps the spine flexible.
- Tones abdominal organs.
- Creates a lean waist.
- Removes excess gas.
- Activates the liver and spleen.
- Cures gastric disorders.
- Helps displaced vertebrae regain correct position gradually.
- Helpful to people suffering from depression.

Jaanu Sirsasana (Head to Knee Forward Bend)

(Benefits Chakras 2 & 3):

Jaanu Sirsasana is a great forward bending pose that may be performed by students of all levels. Full performance of this pose requires that the hips be open; therefore this pose can be challenging especially for men.

Performing Jaanu Sirsasana:

- Sit on floor with both legs stretched out in front of you.
- Starting on the right, bring the heel of the right foot into the groin area. The sole of the right foot should touch the inner thigh of the left leg.
- Turn slightly toward your left so that when you bend forward the hands are extended the same length from the torso, inhale and bring your arms straight overhead and while exhaling, bring the hands down to touch the toes of your left foot.
- If you cannot reach your foot yet, relax your hands on the leg only to the extent where comfortable.
- Gently elongate your body and, if possible, bring the head to touch the left knee only if possible. DO NOT PUSH.
- Repeat on other side, hold for 1 to 2 minutes.



Benefits of Jaanu Sirsasana:

- Keeps the spine and hips flexible.
- Stimulates liver and kidneys.
- Aids digestion.
- Relieves constipation.
- Helps to relieve an enlarged prostate, hold pose longer to increase this effect.
- Nervous system is toned, calms the mind and helps alleviate anxiety & fatigue.
- Relieves some headaches.
- Relieves menstrual discomfort.
- Helps with insomnia, high blood pressure and sinusitis.

Cautions in Performing Jaanu Sirsasana:

People who suffer from knee injury, asthma, sciatica and diarrhea should consult a physician before performing this pose as these conditions could be aggravated with Jaanu Sirsasana.

Prasarita Padhastasana:

(Benefits Chakras 2 through 5):

This pose is known to open up a yogis entire body allowing for healing to take place. This asana is a standing pose with legs wide and the torso bending forward.

Performing Prasarita Padhastasana:

- Stand with feet together.
- Step to one side widening your stance to 3-4 feet with feet parallel.
- Raise your arms overhead while inhaling, exhale and bend at your waist bringing the torso toward to the floor until below the hips.
- In the beginner's version of this pose, fold you arms together and hang you head and neck toward the floor allowing the neck and upper spine to elongate (see photo). In the more advanced version, with hands on the ground, gradually bring the top of the head to contact the ground and rest in your hands (See photo). In either version keep your torso elongated and do not allow yourself to compress.
- Hold the pose for 30 seconds to one minute.
- To come out of either version, bring the hands slowly to the floor and push the torso up while raising the body upwards from the waist.



Beginner's pose – PICTURE



Advanced Pose - PICTURE

Benefits of Prasarita Padhastasana:

- Stretches and tones legs and back.
- Relieves enlarged prostate.
- Stimulates liver and kidneys.
- Promotes circulation of blood to the head and heart.
- Provides relief to headache, fatigue and depression.

Cautions in Performing Prasarita Padhastasana:

People who suffer from neck or lower back problems should avoid the advanced version of this pose.

Matsyasana (Fish Pose):

(Benefits Chakras 3 through 5):

Matsya is one of the incarnations of Vishnu. In the form of a fish, Vishnu incarnated and saved the earth from flooding. The pose is a lying down back pose that stretches the neck and upper torso.

This pose is excellent to perform after shoulder stands and should be incorporated immediately after performing poses such as Sarvangasana or Halasana (Plow).

Performing Matsyasana:

- Lie on the floor with your back against the floor and your knees bent upward, feet on the floor.
- Raise your pelvis from the ground and place your hands under the area below your upper thighs. Straighten your legs and place the buttocks/upper thighs on your hands.
- Slowly arch your back while raising the torso off the ground. Bend your head back ward and place the top of the head on the ground.
- Do NOT place a significant amount of weight on your head as this may injure your neck. Keep your attention on your thighs and press the body out through your heels.
- Slowly arch the back only to where it is comfortable.
- To come out of this pose, raise your torso and straighten your neck/shoulders.



Benefits of Matsyasana:

- Tones the nerves of the neck and back.
- Compensates for shoulder stand asanas and helps alleviate rounded shoulders.
- Aids respiratory system by stretching the rib cage and increasing the capacity of the lungs.
- Provides relief from fatigue, anxiety, constipation, mild back aches, menstrual pain.

Cautions in Performing Matsyasana:

People suffering from insomnia, serious neck/back injury and pain, high or low blood pressure, or migraines should NOT perform this asana.

Chapter 12: The Pranayamas:

Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise

**Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama
Yoga Breathing Exercise #1: The Breath of Fire**

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Breath of Fire Video - Free Online Yoga Videos](#)

What Is The Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

The first Yoga breathing exercise we will explore lies at the heart of Kundalini Yoga practice, it is the legendary Breath of Fire Yoga Pranayama.

As mentioned above this breathing exercise is absolutely essential to the practice of Kundalini Yoga. The roots of this pranayama are impossible to trace but I would like to thank my teacher [Ravi Singh](#) under whose expert guidance I learned this technique.

Tools Required for Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

Just your nose: -D.

Benefits of Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

Primary:

- Quickly oxygenates your blood, thus helping the body detoxify itself and remove waste more effectively.
- Builds lung capacity and helps purify the respiratory system.
- Generates heat and increases your level of energy by activating the energy flows in your body.
- Synchronizes your entire system under one rhythm, thus promoting greater internal harmony and health.

Secondary:

- Balances and strengthens the Nervous System.
- Magnifies the benefits of exercises done in conjunction with this breath.
- When done forcefully, the pulsating of the diaphragm massages the internal organs, thus improving the digestive system.

Cautions for Practicing Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

- If you feel dizzy when practicing Breath of Fire, you should stop and substitute normal breathing. If you suffer from vertigo, you should use caution in practicing this breathing exercise.

- If you are menstruating you should not practice Breath of Fire, use Long Deep Breathing instead.
- You should be careful practicing Breath of Fire if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or suffer from stroke or epilepsy. Also, if you have acid or heat related gastric issues such as ulcers you should use caution.

How To Do Basic Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

- To practice this breathing exercise, sit up in a comfortable position.
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes.
- Rest your hands in any comfortable position.
- Relax your stomach muscles.
- Now begin to breathe rapidly through the nose with equal emphasis on the inhalation and exhalation. It will be like very fast sniffing. Keep the breath shallow, just at the tip of the nose. Proceed at a comfortable pace and establish a steady rhythm. Pay no special attention to the chest or diaphragm other than staying relaxed. You will find the stomach will pulse on its own to the rhythm of the breath, continue for 1 minute. That's it.

How To Do Intermediate Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

- Perform the breathing at a faster pace.
- Increase the duration of the exercise to 3 minutes

How To Do Advanced Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

- Build up the pace and power with which you do the breathing.
- Build up the time for this pranayama to 11 minutes.

Secret of Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

So the trick question is, "How many breaths are you taking when doing the breath of fire yoga pranayama"? This will be of some special concern to those who believe in the idea that each of us is born with a preset number of breaths and once we finish our quota - the fat lady sings. So for those folks it would be rather alarming to practice this exercise regularly, as they would be drastically reducing their life span - but thankfully they need not worry. The beauty of this breathing exercise, aside from its lengthy list of benefits, is that it registers to the brain as only 1 breath. So put your worries aside and enjoy the practice of this pranayama, which I have found to be one of the real gems of Kundalini Yoga.

[Kapalbhati Yoga Breathing Exercise for Optimum Health & Healing](#)

Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:
[Free Online Video of Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama](#)

What Is Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama (Kapal Bhati Breathing Exercise):

Of the many wonderful [pranayamas](#) that [Yoga](#) gives us, Kapalbhati (aka Kapal Bhati) is one of my favorite breathing exercises. It is not at all complicated to do and yet, when done even for a short time consistently, the benefits are undeniable. If there was only one pranayama that you elected to do, Kapalbhati might well be the one to pick - it's that good!

Kapalbhati of course dates back to the [Yoga Sutras of Sage Patanjali](#), but recently its popularity has been revived by the work of [Ramdev Swamiji](#). Kapalbhati is part of Ramdev Swamiji's set of 6 pranayamas and the practice of this set has spread like wildfire across India as well as the rest of the world. Kapalbhati, in my view, is like the corner stone of this set and many of the absolutely unbelievable benefits that practitioners have been getting from practicing Ramdev Swamiji's set, I am sure, can be attributed to this powerful breathing exercise.

Below are the details of Kapalbhathi Yoga Pranayama.

Benefits of Kapalbhathi Yoga Pranayama (Kapal Bhati Breathing Exercise):

Primary:

- Works on the Heart Center ([Anahat Chakra](#)) and associated organs and systems of that region. Thus improving respiration, lung capacity and blood circulation. Kapalbhathi helps cure associated diseases of this region (asthma, bronchitis etc).
- Works on the Naval Center ([Manipura Chakra](#)) and associated organs and systems in that region. Thus improving digestion and elimination. Cures diseases and imbalances associated with this region such as indigestion, gas, diabetes, etc.
- Practiced over time, Kapalbhathi Pranayama also helps reduce abdominal fat, fight obesity, tone abdominal muscles and bestow core abdominal strength and power.
- From an emotional stand point Kapalbhathi Pranayama purges the system of accumulated emotional debris such as anger, hurt, jealousy, hatred etc., thus dissolving the blockages and removing the imbalances such emotional history causes in the energetic pathways. The cleansing of the energetic pathways ([nadis](#)) increases the magnitude and flow of prana (life-force) and [Kundalini](#) Shakti (energy) throughout all regions of the body.
- From a mental stand point Kapalbhathi Pranayama assists in

throwing out all negative thoughts from the psyche. thus, helping to cleanse and illuminate the mind.

- From a body stand point Kapalbhatai Pranayama should be used to eject any illnesses, diseases, weaknesses from the body thus allowing it grow in health, Vitality and vigor.

Secondary:

- Generates heat in the system to help dissolve toxins and waste matter.
- Adds luster and beauty to your face.

Cautions for Kapalbhatai Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhatai Breathing Exercise):

If you feel dizzy or nauseous you should slow down the force and pace of Kapalbhatai pranayama or stop entirely and return to normal breathing.

- If you have acid or heat related gastric issues such as ulcers you should use caution with Kapalbhatai Pranayama.
- Kapalbhatai is not to be practiced by those suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke or epilepsy.

How To Do Beginner's Kapalbhatai Yoga Pranayama (Kapal Bhati Breathing Exercise):

To practice this breathing exercise sit up in a comfortable position, cross-legged is best.

- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will

align the spine with the back of your head.

- Close your eyes.
- Have your hands in Gyan Mudra. In Gyan Mudra have your thumb tips and index finger meeting, with the wrists resting gently on the knees and the palms turned slightly upwards.
- Relax your stomach muscles.
- Now expel the air as forcefully as you are comfortable with through the nose. This should cause the abdominal muscles to contract sharply and should draw the abdomen inwards towards the spine (like when you suck in your stomach). Then allow the inhalation to occur completely passively without any additional effort. To repeat, the exhalation is done using conscious sharp force, while the inhalation is just a recoil action bringing the air back into the lungs. All the breathing takes place through the nose. Right after the passive inhalation, exhale again forcefully and continue at a steady rhythm.
- Do a round of 10 repetitions.
- Work your way up to doing 5 rounds, while taking a break between each round.
- Practice Note: Unlike doing [Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama](#) you use force during both the inhalation and the exhalation, in Kapalbhathi force is only to be used during the exhalation.

How To Do Intermediate Kapalbhathi Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhathi Breathing Exercise):

Once you feel comfortable with the Beginner's version of Kapalbhathi Yoga Pranayama, perform the breathing exercise with more force if

possible and also increase the number of repetition per round to 50. You may also prefer to do a single round, but with many more repetitions instead (up to 5 minutes worth)

How To Do Advanced Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhata Breathing Exercise):

Build up to doing this pranayama for 15 minutes straight or equivalent number of rounds with more repetitions per rounds.

Secret of Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhata Breathing Exercise):

The secret of the success of Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama lies in where your *mind* is when doing this terrific breathing exercise. If you need to cure your body, then with every exhalation imagine that disease is being purged from your system. If you need to regain emotional balance, then again, with every exhalation visualize the negative emotions or weaknesses being thrown out of your system. If negative thoughts are the issue, let every exhalation expel them from your heart and mind.

The power of the mind has been well documented, you are read about some of it's incredible capability in this article [Mind Power to Manifest Intentions & Desires Instantly](#), so use your mind to help you accomplish that which you have intended and unleash the full potential of Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama.

Powerful 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise for Vitality

Video of 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

[From Yoga Pranayama Video Series - Deep Breathing Exercise](#)

Background of 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

This is the yoga breathing technique that my Kundalini Yoga teacher, Ravi Singh, almost always started our classes with. This is because despite being a simple breathing exercise, its ability to open up and get one's energy going is astonishing.

In addition to awakening one's energy, this particular yoga pranayama also has other significant benefits, which I will detail below. Whether you are new to Yogic breathing techniques or an expert, this particular breath control exercise should be a permanent member in your goodie bag, which you can pull out anytime you need to fire up and vitalize your pranic body (energetic body).

Benefits of Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

Primary:

- Rapidly oxygenates your blood, thus helping the body heal, detoxify and remove waste more effectively.
- Increases the amount of Prana (life-force) you are bringing into your system.

- Improves the elasticity of the lungs and increases respiratory capacity.
- Activates the energy flows in your body.

Cautions for Practicing Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

- If you feel dizzy when practicing this breathing technique, you should stop and substitute normal breathing. If you suffer from vertigo, you should use caution in practicing this breathing exercise.
- You should be careful practicing this pranayama if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or suffer from stroke or epilepsy.

Step-by-step Instructions for Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

- To practice this breathing exercise, sit in a comfortable position.
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes.
- Bring the palms of your hands together at sternum level (like when you pray), but have them 2-4 inches away from your chest. Your elbows should be up such that your forearms are parallel to the ground.
- Press the palms of your hands together applying equal pressure to both sides. The pressure should be firm but not excessive.

- Relax your diaphragm and stomach muscles.
- Now inhale in 4 sniffs and exhale in 4 sniffs. So you are breaking up 1 inhalation into 4 equal parts and breaking up 1 exhalation into 4 equal parts. By the fourth sniff, during the inhalation, you should have completely filled your lungs with air and by the fourth sniff, during the exhalation, you should have completely expelled all the air. Completely inhaling and exhaling by the last sniff is a key part of this breathing technique. Continue for 1-5 minutes. That's it.

Secret of Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

The real benefit of this yoga pranayama is hidden in benefit number three listed above (increases lung capacity). According to Yoga, your evolution can be triggered simply by the capacity of your respiratory system. When it reaches a critical threshold relative to your size, you evolve. By partitioning the breath, this particular breathing technique forces you to maximize the use of your lungs. Thus, helping them expand and absorb more prana (life-force) from the air.

Generally, in everyday life we don't use our full lung capacity and over time this capacity diminishes. So take a bold step towards your spiritual growth and include the Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise into your daily yoga practice. It is a great way to start and will go a long way in helping you finish.

This concludes the Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise.

Chakra Balancing Anuloma Viloma Pranayama

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:
[Video of Anuloma Viloma Pranayama](#)

To see the full version of this video please go here... [Free Online Yoga Video of Chakra Balancing Yoga Pranayama](#)

Background of Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

This is a wonderful and essential breathing exercise to practice before moving on to the practice of other more advanced pranayamas. This breath control technique comes from Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and actually goes by several different names. It is called Nadi Shodhana Pranayama, Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama, Anuloma Viloma Pranayama, Alternate Nostril Breathing Technique, but I think the name that will describe it best is Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise. The version given here is the basic technique, which must be mastered first; later in this book I will give the more advanced versions of this pranayama.

Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise is designed to purify the psychic channels (nadis) through which Kundalini Energy and Prana (Life-Force) flow. There are 3 primary channels for the flow of this energy: Ida, Pingala and Shushumna. It is essential to balance the flow of energy between the Ida and Pingala channels, which run alongside and intertwine the spine. Through the spinal column runs the Shushumna Nadi, the central master channel. The Ida and Pingala can be considered the lunar and solar channels respectively. With the Ida Nadi responsible for cooling, feminine, passive, mental energy and the Pingala Nadi responsible for hot, male, active, physical energy. As the

flow through these 2 channels is harmonized, prana and Kundalini start to flow through Shushumna. This flow through the Shushumna Nadi activates and balances all the seven chakras.

Benefits of Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

Primary:

- Activates Kundalini Flow through the Shushumna, thus awakening the chakras.
- The flow of Kundalini through the Shushumna also induces meditative states of consciousness.
- Calms the mind, promoting peace and tranquility.
- Creates balance, harmony and rhythm in the entire system.
- Prepares the system for more advanced Pranayamas.

Secondary:

- Improves the respiratory system.
- Strengthens the nervous system.
- Purifies the body by oxygenating the blood supply.

Cautions for Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- **As with all breath control practice, only do as much as you are comfortable with.** Start slowly and build up steadily.

- Do not do this breathing exercise if one nostril is blocked or you are requiring force to breathe through it.

How To Do Simple Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- To practice this breathing exercise sit up in a comfortable position. Preferably in a variation of sukha asana (cross legged).
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Fold your index finger and middle finger into the palm of your right hand so just the thumb, ring finger and pinkie are extended. Hold your knee with your left hand.
- Close your eyes.
- Bring your attention to your breathing and take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you. For the rest of the exercise the attention should remain on your breath.
- Now with your right thumb gently close the right nostril and breathe in slowly and completely through the left nostril only counting mentally from 1 to 4.
- Now gently close the left nostril with your right ring finger and pinkie and releasing the right nostril breathe out through it only, counting mentally from 1 to 4.
- Now breathe in through the RIGHT nostril only, keeping the left closed, counting mentally from 1 to 4.

- Finally, re-close the right nostril and breathe out through the left only, counting mentally from 1 to 4. This completes 1 cycle of Anuloma Viloma Pranayama.
- Start with 5 rounds a day and start to add 1 additional round as you make progress. Also, start to add to the count, based on your level of comfort, by 1 for both the inhalation portion and exhalation portion till you reach a count of 12 for each phase. When you can comfortably manage that move onto Intermediate Anuloma Viloma Pranayama.

How To Do Intermediate Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- All steps are the same as above except you should now build up to 15-20 rounds a day and your count should be built up to 24:24 for inhalation and exhalation. After you reach 24:24 (even with less rounds if you don't have much time) you can progress to the Advanced version.

How To Do Advanced Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- In the advanced version you will introduce the optimum ratio for inhalation to exhalation. The ratio should be 1:2. In other words for every count of 1 for inhalation, exhalation should last twice as long. So now perform Nadi Shodhana Pranayama at the ration 12:24 (12 counts for inhalation phase and 24 for exhalation). Build up to 30 rounds a day, or as many as time allows you to do. The upper limit allowed is 80 rounds 4 times a day, so don't worry about over doing it unless you are hitting this limit.
- Later in the website I will introduce the versions of the Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise utilizing both, breath retention and

bandhas (body locks). In general though the above breathing technique should be practiced for at least 4-6 months first before combining with breath retention or body locks.

Hints and Tips Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- 30 years. It took Yogi Bhajan 30 years to master and perfect the flow of breath through either nostril without the use of his hands. This is a worthwhile mental exercise to try. By bringing the power of your attention to the flow through a particular nostril see how well you can modulate it. Here is the link to [Yogi Bhajan's Kundalini Yoga Website](#) if you want to explore.
- Apply the knowledge from this breath control technique to your everyday life and monitor the affects. If you are looking for active energy, breathe exclusively through the Right Nostril, on the other hand, if you are looking to relax or do mental work breathe exclusively through the Left Nostril. Experiment, learn and enjoy.

[Panting Dog \(Lion Pose\) to Detoxify the Body](#)

This particular Kundalini Yoga exercise is excellent for cleansing your body of toxins and helps you to detoxify your entire system. It can be added to the end of any Kriya and should be done prior to the final relaxation period.

This pose is officially a part of Kundalini Yoga Warrior Kriya, which is an advanced kriya that I will publish in the future, and it uses a powerful breathing technique to help purge and cleanse the system. As with all yoga techniques, don't overdo this exercise and build up your capacity slowly.

This particular exercise will be part of the following 3 free e-books here on Mastery of Meditation, as it is a Hatha Yoga pose, a Kundalini Yoga exercise as well as a yoga breathing technique: [Free Hatha Yoga Poses](#), [Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#) & [Free Yoga Breathing Exercises E-book](#).

One last thought before I jump into the details of this terrific pose. I was once attending a yoga camp in upstate NY, where a Hatha Yoga teacher was teaching the class. She asked us to do this pose and afterwards commented that she could immediately tell the Kundalini Yoga students apart from the rest, because they are absolutely not shy and seem to have no social inhibitions when asked to do yoga exercises that are a odd, weird, crazy or even downright embarrassing 😊.

I tell my students exactly that when I ask them to do any technique which is strange or embarrassing. I remind them they are Kundalini Yoga students and they we Kundalini Yogis are fearless and have no inhibitions. We do whatever is necessary to make spiritual progress. So remember this if you feel uncomfortable doing the exercise below.

It is cleansing your system of garbage and toxins, don't worry about how it looks, don't hold back, just go for it!

Yoga Exercise to Cleanse & Detox Your Body

Illustration #1 Detox Yoga Dog BOF

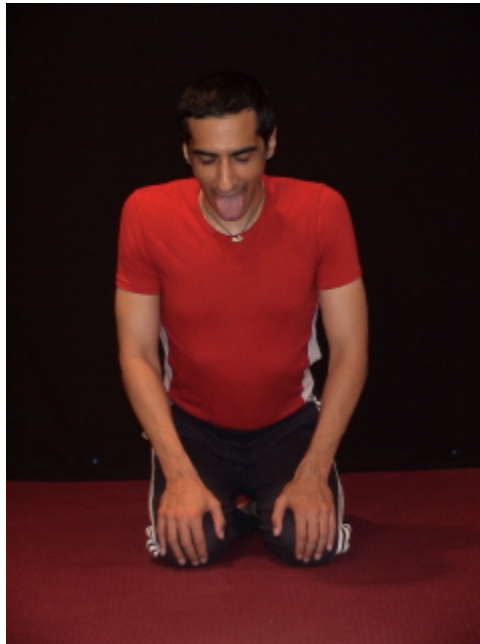


Illustration #2 Detox Yoga Dog BOF



Yoga Exercise to Cleanse & Detox the Body:

a. Instructions for practicing Detoxifying Panting Dog Breath of Fire:

- Yes the pose is called Panting Dog Breath of Fire! 😊
- As illustrated above, sit up on your heels in Rock pose, except lean forward slightly. Rest your hands on your knees as shown.
- Now open your mouth wide and stick your tongue out as far as it will go. Now begin to pant like a dog. Remember what I said above and don't hold back. You are a Kundalini Yogi, just stick your tongue out and pant like a dog. All the breathing should be taking place through the mouth.
- Emphasize the exhalation, and with every exhalation your stomach should be contacting in towards your spine sharply (similar to [Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama](#) in this way). The pace should be fast, just like a tired dog panting.
- If you feel a metallic taste emerging on the back of your tongue, this is toxic heavy metals being release and cleansed from deep within your tissue, keep going!

b. Duration for Detoxifying Panting Dog Breath of Fire:

- 1 - 5 minutes. If 1 minute is too much you can start with 15 seconds and build up from there as well.

c. Benefits of Detoxifying Panting Dog Breath of Fire:

- Detoxifies and cleanses your system of garbage, toxins and heavy metals.

- Strengthens and tones your abdominal muscles.
- Builds your respiratory capacity.
- Promotes good health and longevity.

d. *Practice Tips for Detoxifying Panting Dog Breath of Fire:*

- Like I mentioned above, you can add this exercise to the end of any Kundalini Yoga Kriya. It helps your system purge itself of any toxins that have been released into the blood stream as a result of the Kriya.
- After doing this cleansing exercise, I also recommend drinking plenty of water once your yoga session is completed, to further help wash out any released toxins.
- Given the amount of pollution in our air and water, we can't afford not to incorporate Panting Dog Breath of Fire into our routine from time to time. It really will help cleanse and detoxify your entire system.

Sheetali Pranayama for Reducing Stress

Sheetali Pranayama – The Cooling Breath

Video of Sheetali Pranayama

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

[From Yoga Pranayama Video Series – Sheetali Pranayama](#)

What is Sheetali Pranayama:

Sheetali Pranayama is Yoga's answer to heat, stress, anger and irritation. Sheetal means calmness and peacefulness and those are the results of practicing this cooling breath. I recently undertook the practice of Sheetali Pranayama when an internal heat imbalance took place within my body and I am happy to report that the energies within have been cooled and equilibrium has been restored.

Sheetali [Pranayama](#) comes directly from the traditional schools of [Hatha Yoga](#), but, it was also taught to me in my [Kundalini Yoga](#) training and is a widely used breathing technique to combat Ayurveda's Pitta (Heat: see [Introducing Ayurveda - Alternative Medicine for Self Healing](#)) related issues. Sheetali is another pranayama worth having in your repertoire and its simplicity makes it possible to do it anywhere and an anytime.

Below are the details of Sheetali Pranayama.

Benefits of Sheetali Pranayama:

Primary benefits of Sheetali Pranayama:

- Cools the mental, physical and emotional systems and reduces internal heat.
- Reduces stress and creates a sense of tranquility and peace.
- Reduces anger and irritation promoting calm.
- Reduces fever.
- Combats other Pitta related disturbances such as acidity, burning eyes, heat rash etc.

Secondary benefits of Sheetali Pranayama:

- Stimulates and assists in digestion.
- Helps combat restlessness and helps induce sleep.

Cautions for Sheetali Pranayama:

There are not many cautions for practicing Sheetali Pranayama. Since it's a cooling breath it will increase Kapha (mucus) so don't practice it if you have cold and respiratory related issues. Also, in winter don't overdo it to avoid exacerbating Kapha and excessively cooling the system.

Instructions for Beginner's Sheetali Pranayama:

To practice Sheetali pranayama sit up in a comfortable position, you can also practice this breathing exercise standing up or lying down. The instructions below are for as if you are sitting, but, for other positions only a slight modifications should be needed.

- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes and place your hands on your knees.
- Now curl the sides of your tongue up to create a tunnel and slowly breathe in through your mouth allowing the air to pass over your tongue thus creating a cooling sensation.
- After you inhale, bring the tongue back in and exhale through the nose. Then again stick the curled tongue out and repeat.
- Do 10 repetitions. One breath cycle of inhalation and exhalation makes 1 repetition.

Instructions for Intermediate Sheetali Pranayama:

The only change for intermediate Sheetali Pranayama is to increase the number of repetitions from 10 up to 50.

Modification for Sheetali Pranayama:

The key to Sheetali Pranayama is the cooling of the air as it passes through the curled tongue, unfortunately, not everyone can curl his or her tongue in this manner. If you fall into this category just curl the

sides of you tongue up as far as possible and breathe in allowing the air to flow over the tongue to create the coolness as best as possible.

Secret of Sheetal Pranayama:

According to Yoga lore, The Fonz (Fonzie from the TV show Happy Days) practiced Sheetal Pranayama in secret and it was the reason why he was so cool :-).

3 Most Powerful Yoga Pranayamas and Kriyas - Sodarshan Chakra Kriya - Part 1

Most Powerful Yoga Pranayama Video

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

Sodarshan Chakra Kriya Video

Pranayama, the science of breathing and breath control, is undoubtedly one of the greatest arts one can learn and practice for spiritual growth and personal development. It holds within itself the power to transform the lowest most gross to the highest most refined. This transforming power of pranayama can act upon any and all levels of your being, whether that is physical, emotional, mental or spiritual (energetic). This science has been perfected over the centuries in the East and was mostly kept a secret, only handed down verbally from Guru to a deserving disciple. Now, it is much more available to those who seek it, but I still feel that the knowledge really only finds those who are deserving of it. Having said that, life has brought you here now, so take this opportunity and discover the tremendous power of the Science of Pranayama.

The 3 Pranayamas I am going to present here are typically not for beginners. Fortunately, all 3 have modifications, which you can start out with first before building up to the advanced techniques. I will also present these modifications here and I strongly suggest you start with them first before jumping ahead to the advanced techniques. In moving forward sanely, gently and systematically you will prepare the system to better handle the affects of the advanced forms. This systematic approach is not only much safer, but is also better for extracting the full benefits of the pranayamas. Part 1 of this series is

about Sodarshan Chakra Kriya. Before I go into Sodarshan Chakra Kriya, I want to give some quick guidelines that should be followed for all 3 pranayamas in this series.

Basic Guidelines for practicing Pranayama:

- Do not practice any advanced pranayama if you are unwell. Only do light easy pranayamas.
- Clothing should be loose and should not restrict the movement of the abdomen. Our breathing is already very shallow, we don't need to compound the issue further by hampering the natural movement of our diaphragm.
- Your stomach should be empty. Which means you need to wait at least 2-3 hours after a meal before practicing pranayama.
- If possible practice in the early morning. Early morning is the best time to practice your sadhana (spiritual work). For more information and help on this you can read [The Secret on How to Become an Early Riser.](#)
- You should sit in a comfortable position, preferably in some variation of cross-legged (sukh asana). For more information on sukh asana or other positions you can sit in (like a chair) see [Silent Mind Meditation Program: Basic Meditations - Chapter 7.](#)
- Most importantly, **DO NOT STRAIN**. I cannot emphasize that enough. Take your time, you will enjoy your practice more and you will be able to establish a regular routine, as you will not dread doing your daily work.
- One last thing. The pranayamas being taught here, when practiced sincerely over time, can bestow great power to the practitioner. Normally, these techniques were not transcribed

and as mentioned earlier, were taught only to those held in great trust, so I ask you to respect that trust and agree to **not in any way misuse the powers** obtained from the practices described below.

Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Background:

Sodarshan Chakra Kriya (set) was taught to me by my Kundalini Yoga teacher [Ravi Singh](#) who studied it under the guidance of [Yogi Bhajan](#). It dates back a few thousand years and is reputed among all the known Yogas, including Kundalini Yoga, to be the most powerful Pranayama exercise there is. You will notice that it is called a kriya, although a kriya typically is a complete set of asanas and yogic exercises (see [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga](#) for more information on kriyas and how Kundalini Yoga works in general), it also applies in some cases to a single exercise, which is very complete in and of itself. Sodarshan Chakra Kriya is a pranayama exercise that is exactly that, very complete and also very powerful.

Benefits of Sodharshan Chakra Kriya:

The superlatives describing Sodarshan Chakra Kriya are lavish to say the least. In Yoga terms it will give you Nao Niddhi (the nine precious virtues) and Artha Siddhi (the 18 occult powers). These 27 facets contain all of human life and in acquiring them you perfect all that can be perfected in a human. Given this Kriya's reputation for bestowing Psychic and Yogic Powers, it is often practiced by those interested in acquiring these Siddhis (powers). There is no harm in this, as long as these powers are used for the benefit of others and to assist you in your spiritual progress. This kriya, though, is equally valuable to those interested in the final goal of human life - to see and merge with the Divine Non-Dual nature of Reality. This is because, it is very effective in dissolving the blockages (granthis) caused by frozen emotional

debris in the nadis (the channels for the movement of Kundalini Energy) and as the channels are purified greater flow of kundalini is facilitated allowing for the chakras (energy vortexes) to be activated and balanced. In turn, the activation of the chakras and this greater flow of Kundalini Shakti (energy) leads to the refinement of awareness, which allows one to penetrate the veil of illusion - that Reality consists of duality.

Sodarshan Chakra Kriya also dramatically improves your physical wellbeing. In fact, as you practice it you will start to feel quite invincible over time. It expands your nervous system, respiratory system and helps your digestive system. I find that the most profound health benefit is a boost to the immune system when I practice this kriya regularly. Overall the kriya promotes peace, joy and strength.

Description of Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Sit up straight, have your spine erect and bring head back slightly (not up) so your chin is subtly drawn in and back like a soldier at attention. This aligns your spine with the back of your head and is also called Jalandhara Bandha. Your eyes should be 1/10th open looking down at the tip of your nose. Rest your left hand on your left knee. Block your right nostril with your right thumb and have the remaining fingers pointing upwards. Now breathe in deeply through the left nostril filling your lungs to capacity. Lower your right hand now and place it on your right knee. With your breath held in (Antar Kumbhaka) begin to pump your stomach (pulling in the abdominal muscles) to the mantra "Wahay Guru". You will pump your stomach 3 times for each iteration of Wahay Guru. Once for Wa, once for Hay and once for Guru. The mantra should be chanted mentally of course, since the breath is held in. Chant for a total of 16 Wahay Gurus, so for a total of 48 stomach pumps with the breath held in. Then raise your right hand, close off the left nostril with your right pinkie and breathe out of your right nostril. This completes 1 cycle - breathe in through left nostril, hold and pump, breathe out through right nostril. Continue

to repeat this cycle for the duration of the kriya.

Duration:

There is no formal time duration for Sodarshan Chakra Kriya; it is left up to the practitioner to determine what is right for them. Below I will give the recommendations when I discuss the modifications.

Beginners Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Modify kriya as follows: Do only 1 pump for each chant of Wahay Guru. So in total with your breath held in you will do 16 pumps per cycle. Also, reduce the force of the pump to where you are comfortable. Start with 3 minutes and build up to 11 minutes. The kriya should be practiced daily.

Intermediate Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Modify kriya as follows: Do only 2 pumps for each chant of Wahay Guru; once for Wahay and once for Guru. So in total you will do 32 pumps with your breath held in per cycle. Pump your stomach with a moderate force. You should try to do 11 minutes, and then go to 22 minutes and then to 31 minutes daily.

Advanced Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Do the kriya as described above in the description section. You should be pumping your stomach with full force and you should do 31 minutes daily. The commitment should be to do 40 days without missing a day, 31 minutes each day. This was exactly the requirement by Ravi for his Kundalini Yoga teacher's training course as well. If you miss a day, you go back to 1 and start over till you complete 40 days.

Perfected Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Yes there is more, you are not done yet: -D. To do the perfect and

complete kriya and thus extract the maximum benefit and reach super human caliber, the requirement is to do 62 minutes per day and build it up to 2 1/2 hours everyday. If you can discipline yourself to do that, the kriya will provide everything needed in all areas of your life.

Design of Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

This kriya bestows its many blessings by taking full advantage of many important aspects of Pranayama and Yoga numerology. Below are some of the details behind this successful design.

- Breathing in through the left nostril activates the right hemisphere of the brain. This hemisphere is responsible for your meditative, creative and artistic powers. Activating it helps unleash and grow these aspects of your nature.
- The number 16 is associated with the Ajna Chakra; also known as the Third Eye, Divine Eye or the Eye of Shiva. Chanting the mantra Wahay Guru 16 times activates Ajna Chakra, which is responsible for many psychic abilities and the power of intuition and wisdom.
- The mantra itself, Wahay Guru, means ecstasy beyond words and represents one's higher consciousness. Chanting this mantra attracts this divine energy towards one.
- Pumping the navel helps ignite and awaken Kundalini Shakti so she can make her ascent up the primary Nadi (Shushumna) all the way up to the Crown Chakra (Sahasrara Chakra) activating, rejuvenating, balancing and healing all the other Chakras and associated organs in her path.

[Surya Bedhi Pranayama for Energy](#)

"Simple Yet Powerful", that is the apt description for Surya Bedhi Yoga Pranayama, also called Right Nostril Breathing. This breathing exercise simply requires one to isolate and breathe exclusively through the right nostril, the result of which is to ignite and activate the Sun channel (Pingala Nadi). Here is a brief overview of the Kundalini Yoga channel system to help understand better how this breathing exercise works and delivers its many excellent benefits.

In Kundalini Yoga there are 3 primary channels (nadis) for the flow of energy through the Chakras: Ida, Pingala and Shushumna (Read [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga](#) and [Kundalini Yoga Seven Chakra System](#) for more info on Chakras or Energy Centers). The Ida and Pingala can be considered the lunar and solar channels respectively and run alongside the Shushumna, which is the central channel running through the center of the spine. The Ida Nadi is responsible for cooling, feminine, passive, mental energy and the Pingala Nadi responsible for hot, male, active, physical energy. **Breathing through the Right Nostril activates Pingala Nadi, thus increasing energy and heat in the system.**

This is the ninth chapter of our [Free Online Yoga Breathing Exercises E-Book](#).

Benefits of Surya Bedhi Yoga Pranayama (Right Nostril Breathing):

- Increases energy in the body.
- Creates Vitality and gives strength for physical work.

- Fights malaise and lethargy.
- Alleviates depression and other ailments related to low energy and down emotions.
- Excellent to combat timidity and shyness.

Cautions for Practicing Surya Bedhi Yoga Pranayama (Right Nostril Breathing):

- If you have heat related issues you should not practice Surya Bedhi Pranayama.
- Very similar cautions as [Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama](#) (Bellows Breath), where you should be careful if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or suffer from stroke or epilepsy. Also, if you have acid or heat related gastric issues such as ulcers you should use caution.

How to Do Surya Bedhi Yoga Pranayama (Right Nostril Breathing):

- To practice this yoga breathing exercise, sit up in a comfortable position. Preferably in a variation of sukh asana (cross legged). You may also sit on a chair if you like, with your back straight.
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Fold your index finger and middle finger into the palm of your right hand so just the thumb, ring finger and pinkie are extended. Hold your knee with your left hand.

- Close your eyes if you like.
- Bring your attention to your breathing and take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you. For the rest of the exercise the attention should remain on your breath.
- Now gently close the left nostril with your right ring finger and pinkie and breathe long, slow and deep through the RIGHT nostril only.
- You should inhale as well as exhale through the right nostril only, keeping the left nostril closed with your ring finger and pinkie.
- Do a round of 10 repetitions and then inhale completely, hold your breath in for 1-5 seconds and then exhale completely. Over time you can build up to 5-15 minutes of this pranayama. Be sure to start slowly and work your way up.

[Ujjayi Pranayama for Deep Relaxation](#)

Yogic Breathing for Insomnia and Longevity

What is Ujjayi Pranayama?

Ujjayi Yoga Pranayama, or the victorious breath, is another breathing technique worth having tucked away in your toolbox of valuable yoga exercises for optimum living. Anytime you find that you can't sleep, need to relax, regain your health, get a dose of joy or prepare your mind for meditation, you can pull out this amazing technique and enjoy its wide ranging benefits.

Ujjayi Yoga Pranayama is an integral part of Hatha Yoga and is widely used by many different schools of yoga. On [Mastery of Meditation & Yoga](#), this breathing technique will be chapter 10 on our ongoing [Free Online Yoga Breathing Exercises E-book](#).

The great thing about Ujjayi Yoga Pranayama is that you can practice it anytime and in any position (in fact I am doing and enjoying this technique even as I write this article now), but the tricky part is that, although it is a very simple technique, it is a little bit difficult to describe in words. Nevertheless, I will try to explain it the best way possible and am sure soon enough it will become a part of your yoga knowledge and spiritual practice.

Below are the bountiful benefits of this breathing technique, followed by step-by-step instructions on how to practice this pranayama.

Benefits of Ujjayi Pranayama:

- Relaxes the mind and calms the entire organism down.
- Promotes a sense of joy and peace.

- Prepares the mind for meditation.
- Re-balances the internal systems, helps the body regain it's equilibrium and promotes longevity.
- Excellent technique for those who can't sleep and helps treat insomnia.
- Helps lower blood pressure.

Cautions for Ujjayi Pranayama:

Although there are not many cautions for practicing Ujjayi Pranayama, I have presented an advanced version below, which you should not rush to do until you have developed your capacity sufficiently. So, in other words, steady gentle progress is the name of the game.

Instructions for Beginner's Ujjayi Breathing Technique:

As I mentioned above, one of the best parts of this breathing technique is that you can practice it in any position. You are welcome to do Ujjayi Pranayama, sitting, standing, lying down or even while taking a walk.

- Start by taking five long, deep, slow breaths to help relax you.
- Close your eyes if you like. Do close them if you can't sleep and are going to use this breathing technique to help you conquer insomnia.
- Now comes the slightly tricky part. You are going to constrict the throat muscles slightly and visualize as if you are breathing through a hole in your throat. This slight constriction and visualization should lead to the air making a soft oceanic sound as it passes through your throat region. The sound should be that of the distant ocean surf. Steady and soft as you inhale and

also, steady and soft as you exhale. Visualize as if you are breathing not through your nose, but your throat instead.

- Continue to breathe in this way and allow your entire mind and body to be consumed by this pleasant sound. Find a nice slow rhythm and lose yourself to it.
- Continue on for as long as you like, or until you fall asleep 😊.

Instructions for Advanced Ujjayi Breathing Technique:

The advanced version of this technique incorporates breath retention into the cycle. Don't use the advanced version if you are employing the technique to help you sleep. Simply use the beginner's version and extend the time for inhalation and exhalation to a comfortable level.

For the advanced version, you are going to develop the inhalation, hold breath in, exhalation time cycle to a ratio of $x-4x-2x$. So if you inhale for 4 seconds, you will hold your breath in for 16 seconds and then use 8 seconds to exhale. But it is very important that you move towards this ratio slowly.

A good approach is to work up to 4-4-4 and then gently increase the hold and exhalation portion to 4-5-5 until, 4-8-8. Then work your way up to 4-9-8 and onwards to 4-16-8. Again, find an approach that suits you, but in all cases don't strain or overdo it.

You can practice Ujjayi Pranayama for 11 minutes or more.

Ujjayi Breathing Technique Final Thoughts:

Remember the key to this technique is the soft sound you are creating with the air passing through your throat. It is like the very soft

snoring of a sleeping baby, and hopefully that is how it will help you sleep as well.

Another breathing technique which bestows similar benefits to Ujjayi Pranayama is [Anuloma Viloma Pranayama](#), which is perhaps the most famous of all yoga breathing exercises.

[Supreme Yogic Breath for Mind Control](#)

1 Minute Breathing for Brain Development

The mind and breath are intimately related. In fact, one of the best and most effective ways to silence the mind, is by slowing down the breath, and the reverse is true as well, if your mind is calm and serene, your breath too will be slow and fine. Kundalini Yoga's 1 minute yogic breath is one of the most powerful techniques for creating this silencing affect on the brain, but like all powerful yoga pranayamas, this technique also demands that you approach it with respect and intelligence.

This pranayama takes some time to master. It is difficult and since it involves one of the more advanced aspects of yogic breathing, breath retention, it is prudent to develop this technique slowly and build up one's capacity steadily over time. Once mastered though, for brain development and mind control, this pranayama is one of the best. If you are new to yoga practice, I suggest incorporating this technique into your practice so that you can start to develop your expertise in it and therefore enjoy it's great rewards in due course.

1 Minute Yogic Breath comes from the powerful school of Kundalini Yoga. Ravi Singh, who learned it from Yogi Bhajan, taught it to me. On [Mastery of Meditation & Yoga](#), this breathing technique will be chapter 11 on our ongoing [Free Online Yoga Breathing Exercises E-book](#).

Below are the bountiful benefits of this breathing technique, followed by step-by-step instructions on how to practice this pranayama.

Benefits of 1 Minute Yogic Breath:

- Gives one tremendous inner peace and tranquility.
- Helps rejuvenate the brain.
- Help one control the mind and thoughts.
- Helps you conquer fear and become courageous.
- Keeps the brain healthy.
- Calms the entire nervous system and helps dissolve stress.
- Excellent for inducing meditative states of consciousness.
- Develops willpower.
- Builds respiratory capacity.
- Expands and builds the pranic body (energetic body).

Cautions for 1 Minute Yogic Breath:

As the name implies the 1 minute yogic breath, is a single breath cycle done over the course of 1 minute: 20 seconds to inhale, 20 seconds hold breath in and 20 seconds to exhale. This is, as I mentioned above, not easy to do initially and as it involves breath retention, it should be approached cautiously and slowly. The pranayama should not be done using strain. You should start with only 5 seconds for each phase and build up gently from there.

From 5 seconds, work your way up to 10 seconds and then from there to 15 and finally to 20 seconds per phase.

Instructions for 1 Minute Yogic Breath:

This breath is not complicated at all, but yet it is immensely powerful.

- Sit in any comfortable posture and close your eyes. You may also lie down, but sitting is better.
- Take five long, deep, slow breaths to help relax you.
- Now start the pattern of inhaling slowly, holding breath in and exhaling slowly. As mentioned in the caution above, start with 5 seconds per phase and build up gently from there. Only when you are ready, should you be doing 20 seconds per phase.
- You may practice this pranayama from 1 minute all the way up to 31 minutes in a single sitting.

1 Minute Yogic Breath Tips:

Alternate Technique for Improving Capacity:

You may find over time that you are able to do the 20-20-20 cycle, but only for a few breaths. If that is the case, do a few such 1 minute cycles and then take a break by doing simple long, deep breathing and then return to the 1 minute breath.

Using 1 Minute Breath to Test Pranic Body:

I use 1 minute breath to test my pranic capacity from time to time. So even if I have not been doing this technique, I will sprinkle in 1 minute breath to see what my pranic status is. You will be surprised to find that even though you may not be explicitly doing this technique, a good yoga and pranayama practice builds and keeps your

pranic (energetic) body in tip top shape, which will be verified by being able to do 1 minute yogic breath.

1 Minute Breath for Meditators:

If you are practicing Jyana yoga, awareness meditation, insight meditation, [silent mind meditation](#), [zazen or zen meditation](#), vipassana, etc., you will know the importance of spontaneous breath suspension. 1 minute yogic breath can be very helpful to you if you do practice such meditation techniques, as it assists in this suspension, which translates to greater gaps between thoughts and thus more access to one's silent nature within.

I hope you enjoy this wonderful pranayama and I hope it helps you awaken to your true Self - Sat Nam.

Bhastrika Pranayama for Energy and More

Vigorous Yogic Breathing for Vitality

Background of Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama (Bellows Breath):

This important Yoga Breathing Exercise, Bhastrika Pranayama, is the ultimate pranayama for energy and power. It is one with a long list of benefits, which includes raising metabolic function at the cellular level to increase the burning of fat and promoting healthy, natural weight loss. Other than assisting in healthy weight loss and fat burning, there are a myriad of valuable reasons to include this breathing exercise into your daily Yoga practice and a full list of these benefits is provided below.

Bhastrika Pranayama is also called Bellows Breath as it mimics the working of a bellows used to flame a fire. It pumps air and life-force (prana) vigorously and dynamically throughout the entire system. When practicing this champion of pranayamas be ready for a workout!

Benefits of Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama (Bellows Breath):

Primary:

- Boosts your metabolic rate so your body burns fat faster promoting natural weight loss.
- Purifies your gross and subtle body by eliminating toxins and waste.
- Generates heat in your body and opens up your energy pathways.
- Builds lung capacity and helps clear and strengthen the respiratory system.

Secondary:

- Expands and fortifies your nervous system.
- When done forcefully, the pulsating of the diaphragm massages the internal organs, thus improving your digestive system.

Cautions for Practicing Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama (Bellows Breath):

- If you feel dizzy or nauseous you should slow down the pace of bhastrika pranayama or stop entirely and return to normal breathing. If you suffer from vertigo, you should use caution in practicing this breathing exercise.
- If you are menstruating you should not practice this breathing exercise.
- You should be careful practicing Bhastrika Pranayama if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or suffer from stroke or epilepsy. Also, if you have acid or heat related gastric issues such as ulcers you should use caution.

Beginner's Breath of Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama (Bellows Breath):

- To practice this breathing exercise sit up in a comfortable position. You may also practice it lying down or standing up, but, sitting is best.
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.

- Close your eyes.
- Place your hands on your knees.
- Relax your stomach muscles.
- Now begin to breathe as forcefully as comfortably through the nose with equal emphasis on the inhalation and exhalation. The diaphragm should expand and contract in conjunction with your breathing. All the breaths should be deep and powerful and you should try to establish a steady rhythm. The pace should be about 1 second for inhalation and about the same for exhalation.
- Do a round of 10 repetitions and then inhale completely, hold your breath in for 1-5 seconds and then exhale completely. This completes 1 round. Take a short break.
- Work your way up to doing 5 rounds.

Intermediate Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama (Bellows Breath):

- Once you feel comfortable with the Beginner's version of Bellows Breath perform the breathing exercise at a faster pace now, about 1 breath per second. Also, breathe more forcefully if possible.
- Increase the number of repetitions slowly till you reach about 50 repetitions per round.
- At the end of every round, don't forget to inhale completely and hold your breath. Build up this period of breath retention as well to about 15 seconds.
- You should still take a short break between rounds.

Advanced Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama (Bellows Breath):

- Build up the pace and power with which you do this breathing exercise to almost 2 breaths per second.
- Increase the period of breath retention at the end of every round to 30 seconds. Still continue to take a break between rounds though.

Secret of Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama (Bellows Breath):

The final goal of Yoga is to awaken Kundalini Shakti (latent human potential energy) and Bhastrika Pranayama is one of the most effective breathing exercises for stimulating and raising this energy in you. Think of Kundalini as smoldering embers deep within you and think of Bhastrika as waves of prana stoking and igniting these embers. Be ready to handle the inferno!

[Seetkari Pranayama to Lower Blood Pressure and More](#)

Cooling Breath for High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure can be influenced a great deal by many natural methods and therapies. One such natural way to combat high blood pressure is by the practice of certain Yoga Breathing Exercises (Pranayamas). Of the many yoga breathing exercises the ones that are calming and cooling in nature are good for lowering blood pressure, and of those, Seetkari Pranayama is one of the best. Although lowering blood pressure is one of the benefits of this wonderful technique, Seetkari pranayama bestows many other important benefits as well. You will find those enumerated in the benefits section below.

This breathing exercise is very easy to learn and practice and it will become part of our ongoing [Free Online Yoga Pranayamas E-book](#) here on Mastery of Meditation and Yoga. Also, a video demonstration of this technique is planned and I will upload that here once it is ready. Before practicing any yoga or fitness routine please make sure you are medically cleared to do so. Also, please follow the guidelines for yoga breathing as I have explained in the following article, [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Breathing Exercises](#) and read our [Legal Disclaimer](#).

The science behind many of these natural breathing techniques actually extends from Ayurveda, which is the ancient Indian science of health and longevity. You can get more information regarding Ayurveda in the following article, [Introducing Ayurveda - Alternative Medicine for Self Healing](#), and also Ayurvedic dietary principles and

natural therapies can be excellent to help you fight high blood pressure further.

Seetkari pranayama is closely related to Sheetal Pranayama and both bestow many of the same benefits, including lowering blood pressure, so please feel free to try Sheetal Pranayama as well to see if it suits you better. You will find details of this technique in the following article, [Sheetali Yoga Breathing Exercise for Reducing Stress](#).

Below are the details of Seetkari Yoga Pranayama to help lower blood pressure and more.

Benefits of Seetkari Yoga Pranayama:

Benefits of Seetkari Yoga Pranayama:

- Helps Reduce Blood Pressure.
- Cools the mental, physical and emotional systems and reduces internal heat (pitta).
- Reduces stress and creates a sense of tranquility and peace.
- Helps fight insomnia.
- Reduces anger and irritation.
- Reduces fever.
- Combats other Pitta related disturbances such as acidity, burning eyes, heat rash etc.

Cautions for Seetkari Yoga Pranayama:

There are not many cautions for practicing Seetkari Pranayama. Since it's a cooling breath it will increase Kapha (mucus) so don't practice it if you have cold and respiratory related issues. See the Introduction to Ayurveda article above for more information on this.

Instructions for Seetkari Yoga Breathing Exercise:

To practice Seetkari pranayama sit up in a comfortable position, you can sit cross legged or on a chair if needed.

- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes and place your hands on your knees.
- Take 5 long deep breaths through the nose to relax and calm you. Your blood pressure should already start dropping 😊.
- Now bring your teeth together lightly and pull the lips back. Your teeth should now be exposed.
- Now simply inhale slowly and deeply allowing the air to pass through your teeth. The air passing through the teeth should make a hissing sound.
- To exhale, close your mouth and exhale slowly and completely through the nose. This completes 1 round.
- Do 10 repetitions to start with and then over time you can build up to 50 repetitions.

Seetkari Yoga Pranayama to Reduce Blood Pressure Summary:

As I mentioned above the cooling or calming yogic breathing exercises are excellent natural ways for lowering blood pressure. In addition to Sheetalī Pranayama another breathing technique that has been known to be very effective for reducing high blood pressure is Anuloma Viloma Pranayama, and you will find the details for this technique in the article, [Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise - Anuloma Viloma](#). This technique is really one of the best yoga breathing exercises and whether or not you have high blood pressure, it is a must do everyday exercise for overall personal and spiritual growth.

Chapter 13: The Mudras & Bandhas

Comprehensive Guide to Yoga Mudras

Yoga Hand Gestures

In part 1 of this series I detailed 5 important Yoga Mudras for you, which I will include in this Free Comprehensive Guide to Hand Yoga. So below you will find Yoga Mudras Part 1 and following it are more illustrations and details of yoga hand positions and how they can enhance your personal spiritual practice. In the future, as I add more yoga mudras to the website, I will include them here in this guide so you have complete access to this wonderful science all in one place.

Yoga Mudras

An important aspect of yoga is the subtle, but key practice of hand, body and eye postures, to invoke certain flows of energy and create certain states of consciousness, called yoga mudras, hand yoga or hand yoga gestures. In last month's newsletter I introduced you all to yoga mudras and provided 5 important mudras to start with. In the newsletter I also mentioned I would be creating a comprehensive guide to yoga hand gestures, and here now is that guide.

What exactly is Hand Yoga or Mudras?

Mudras are hand, body or eye positions that facilitate certain energy flows in the body and by forming these mudras you can induce certain states of mind and consciousness. Many of the meditation and yoga techniques on this website utilize mudras and mudras are a key part of yogic technology.

Hand yoga gestures generally work by preventing the dissipation of prana (life-force) from the fingertips. In order to do this, one brings the fingers together in various ways, which helps create certain subtle

energy circuits. These circuits then channel prana along particular pathways to affect the mind/body complex in specific ways. Although their effects are subtle, those with refined awareness can sense the changes they produce.

Below you will find illustrations of many important hand yoga positions and an explanation of what their benefits are. Many thanks, to the hand model for these pictures, my wife Trupti 😊.

Hand Yoga Gestures:

Hand Yoga Gesture 1: GYAN MUDRA:

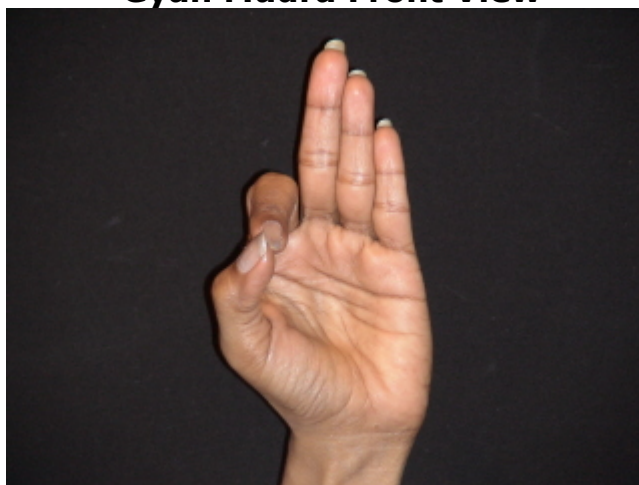
Practice:

Taken by bringing together the thumb tip and index finger of each hand. Other 3 fingers are kept extended. This is the traditional hand posture for Hindu meditations.

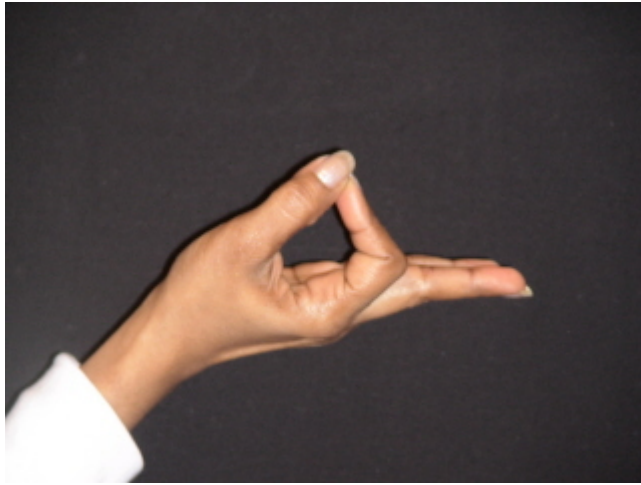
Benefits:

- Excellent for meditation.
- Helps the mind go inward.
- Bestows wisdom and insight.

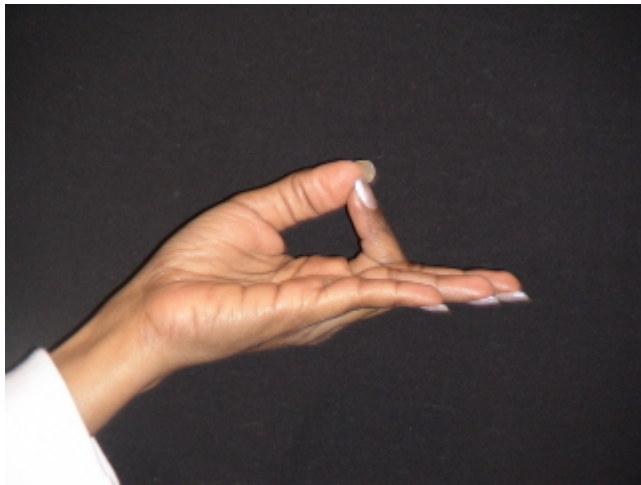
Gyan Mudra Front View



Gyan Mudra Side View 1



Gyan Mudra Side View 2



Hand Yoga Pose 2: COSMIC MUDRA:

Practice:

Taken by placing the right hand over left (some prefer the other way around) with the thumb tips slightly meeting. The index finger and thumbs form a nice oval. This is the traditional hand posture for Buddhist meditations.

Benefits:

The benefits of Cosmic Mudra are very similar to Gyan mudra as they are both used for meditation.

- Excellent for silent meditations.
- Helps the mind go inward.
- Promotes the flow of intuition, insight and awareness.
- Helps silence the mind of thoughts.

Cosmic Mudra



Hand Yoga Position 3: ACTIVE GYAN MUDRA:

Practice:

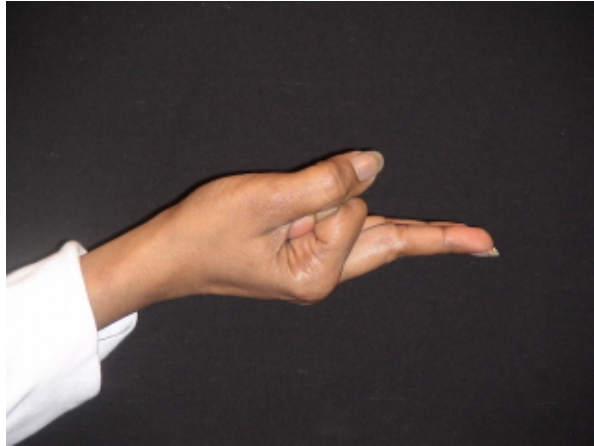
Taken by folding the index finger under the thumb. Other 3 fingers are kept extended. This is good for active techniques, especially active yoga breathing exercises. It is also good for some meditations. Benefits:

- Excellent for active pranayamas.
- Promotes the flow of knowledge.
- Also promotes a meditative state of mind.

Gyan Mudra Active – Front



Gyan Mudra Active – Side



Hand Yoga Gesture 4: NAMASTE POSE:

Practice:

Taken by bringing the palms of both hands together and pressing together gently. All fingers are together and pointing straight up. This is the traditional mudra for praying and greeting each other, in the Hindu, Buddhist and other cultures.

Namaste essentially means, "My Divine Aspect Lovingly and Respectfully Greets Your Divine Aspect".

Benefits:

- Promotes humility and sense of respect.
- Balances the two hemispheres of the brain.
- Creates a prayerful state of mind.
- Can be used to stimulate the Heart Chakra and also the Third Eye Chakra.

Namaste Pose - Front View



Hand Yoga Pose 5: SURYA MUDRA:

Practice:

Taken by bringing the ring finger and thumb tip together, while other fingers are kept straight. This mudra is used in yoga techniques and meditations that are very active and powerful in nature.

A variation to Surya Mudra is to place the ring finger under the thumb, instead of just having the tips meeting, which is how it is illustrated below.

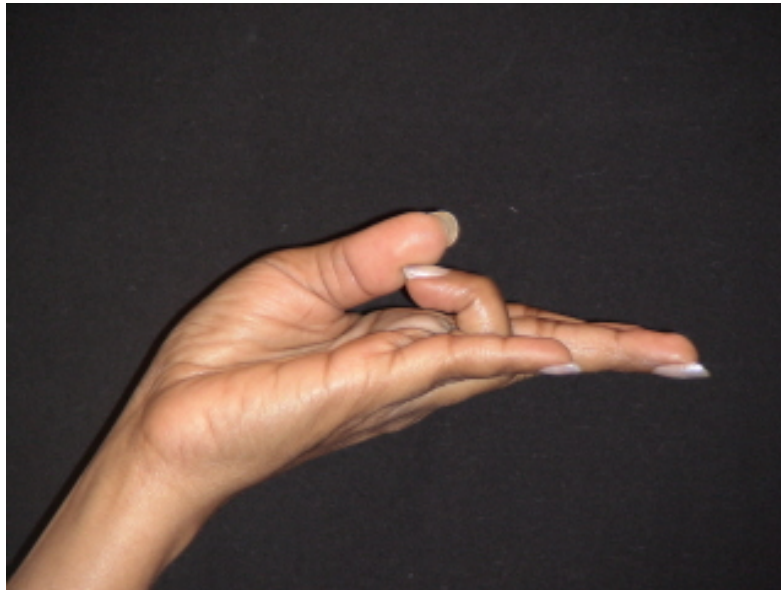
Benefits:

- Promotes energy and power.
- Promotes health and vitality.

Surya Mudra - Front View



Surya Mudra - Side View



Hand Yoga Pose 7: SHUNI MUDRA:

Practice:

Taken by bringing the middle finger and thumb tip together, while other fingers are kept straight.

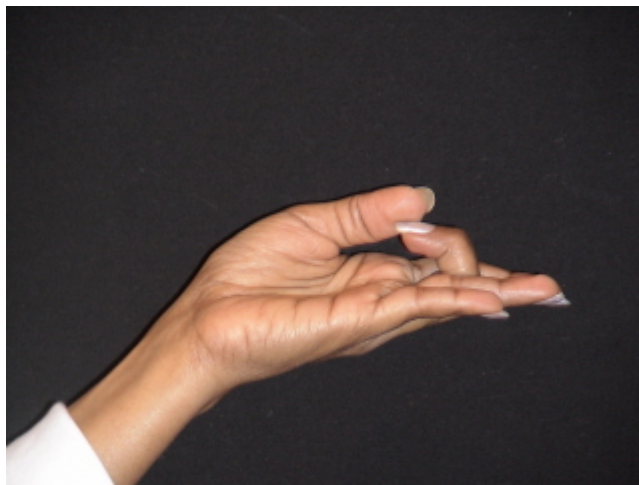
Benefits:

- Promotes patience.

Shuni Mudra - Front View



Shuni Mudra - Side View



Hand Yoga Gesture 8: BUDDHI MUDRA:

Practice:

Taken by bringing the little finger and thumb tip together, while other fingers are kept straight.

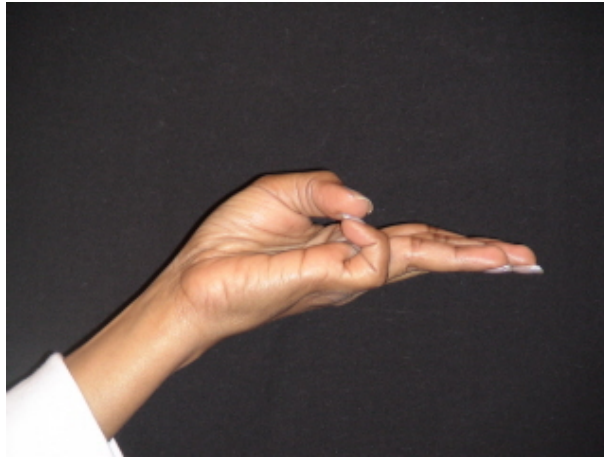
Benefits:

- Promotes communication.
- Helps the body and mind heal.

Buddhi Mudra - Front View



Buddhi Mudra - Side View



Hand Yoga Gesture 9: APAN MUDRA:

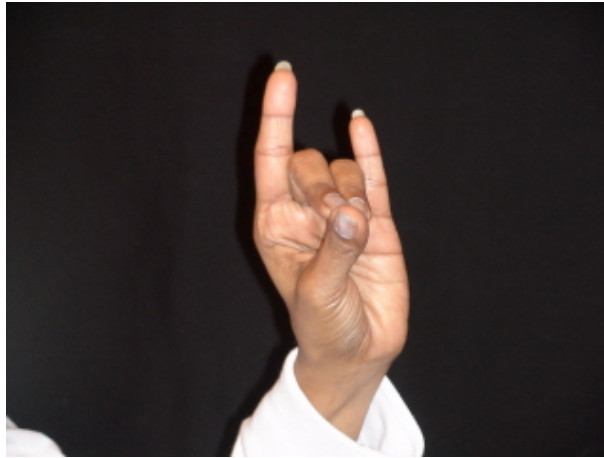
Practice:

Taken by bringing the middle and ring finger and thumb tip together, while other fingers are kept straight.

Benefits:

- Works on the Apana Vayu and helps cleanse the system.
- Helps the elimination system.

Apan Mudra - Front View



Apan Mudra - Side View



Hand Yoga Gesture 10: PRAN (CHRIST) MUDRA:

Practice:

Taken by bringing the little finger and ring and thumb tip together, while other fingers are kept straight. Also called the Christ Mudra, in which the little finger and ring finger are brought under the thumb, instead of just having the tips meeting (as shown in the illustrations below).

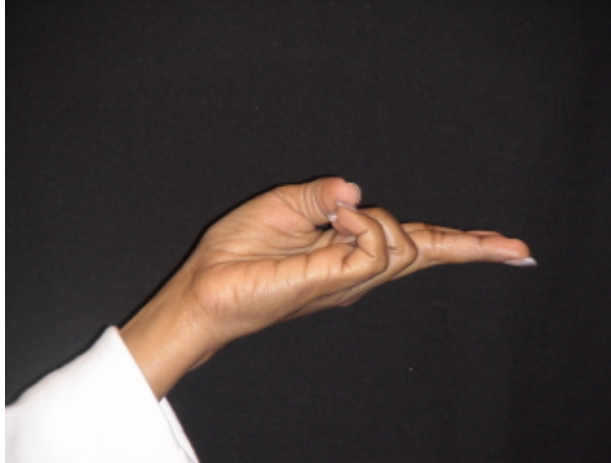
Benefits:

- Helps the eyesight by working on the fire element in the body.
- Known to increase prana and energy in the body.

Christ or Pran Mudra - Front View



Christ or Pran Mudra - Side View



Hand Yoga Gesture 12: BEAR GRIP:

Practice:

Taken by clasping the hands together as shown. The Left hand faces away from the body, while the right hand faces the body. Usually held at chest level for many yoga exercises.

Benefits:

- This grip is used in conjunction with Kundalini Yoga exercises to help draw Kundalini up and down the spine.
- Helps create intensity during practice.

Bear Grip



[Tantric Technique for Sex Chakra Activation](#)

Kundalini tantra yoga practice is essentially the high art of awakening the chakras to promote rapid spiritual advancement and personal mastery. It is a misunderstanding to think of tantra yoga as just sexual yoga. Although there is an entire segment of this science dedicated to the use of sex as a means of awakening kundalini to accelerate spiritual evolution, tantra yoga is much more than just that. In fact, Kundalini Yoga (Hindu or Sikh versions) is actually Kundalini *Tantra Yoga*, and is essentially the use of tantric techniques to purify the body, balance the chakras and awaken kundalini.

The Tantra Yoga technique that I will detail is an example of a tantric technique which falls into the subcategory of sexual tantra, but as you will see, it is consistent with the overall aim of tantra yoga practice, which is to purify and balance the chakra system. If you are not familiar with chakras, you can first read the following article: [Kundalini Yoga Seven Chakra System Overview](#).

Previously I have detailed a very powerful tantric technique, which when practiced sincerely and consistently, helps you raise the vibration of your sexual energy and helps you master your sexual dimension. You can read the details of that technique in the article: [Ultimate Tantric Yoga Technique to Raise Sexual Energy - Sat Kriya](#). The practice I will detail here is subtler than Sat Kriya, but it is also an excellent tantric technique to help you harness and master your sexual energies. This technique is called Vajroli Mudra, and it is a fundamental part of tantra yoga practice.

Below I have detailed the benefits of this technique, provided step-by-step instructions on how to practice it and also provided some practical hints and tips for it. This tantra yoga technique is part of both Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga and so will be included in our [Free Online](#)

[Hatha Yoga Poses](#) and the [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises](#) e-books as well.

Vajroli Mudra - Tantra Yoga Practice Benefits:

- Helps to awaken and balance the Sex Chakra (Swadhisthan Chakra).
- Stimulates Kundalini.
- Helps you master your sexual energies and sexual drive.
- Corrects sexual dysfunctions such as impotence and erectile dysfunction.
- Improves sperm strength and sperm count.
- Helps improve sexual function and balances hormonal levels.
- Develops self-expression, creativity and sensuality.

Beginner's Tantra Yoga Practice - Vajroli Mudra:

- Sit in any easy meditation pose.
- Take 5 deep slow breaths. This will relax your body and mind.
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in, like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Inhale deeply, hold your breath and contract your urethra muscle. This is the muscle you contract when you are holding back from urinating. Contracting this muscle is the act of pulling

it up and inwards.

- Hold the contraction and your breath in for a count of 5 seconds. Then release the contraction and exhale.
- Repeat this cycle for 5 more rounds.

Advanced Tantra Yoga Practice - Vajroli Mudra:

- After you are able to comfortably isolate the muscle and hold for 5 seconds you can increase the time of contraction to a level you are comfortable with and also increase the number of rounds to 10.

Female Tantra Yoga Practice - Sahajoli Mudra:

- The female version of this tantric technique is called Sahajoli Mudra and it involves the same muscle contraction as the male version (the urethra muscle). In the male the testes will move slightly, while in the female the labia will move slightly when applying this mudra.

Hint & Tips for Vajroli / Sahajoli Tantra Yoga Practice:

- Unlike Sat Kriya, this tantric technique is more subtle and requires mental focus and concentration to master. This is primarily because for this technique to be most effective you must be able to contract the urethra exclusively and not engage the other genital and sexual muscles. It takes time to develop this aspect of the technique so have patience and persist.
- This tantric technique is easily practiced anywhere and at any time, so you can find many opportunities throughout your day to develop your expertise.

- A good Kundalini Yoga set of exercise for sexual health can be found here as well: [Yoga Exercises for Sexual Health](#). A tantric technique to prolong sexual intercourse can be found here: [Effective Tantra Yoga Technique to Prolong Sexual Intercourse](#).

[Maha Bandha for Channeling Energy](#)

Along with the use of postures (asana), breath control (pranayama), mantras (sound and thought vibrations) and mudras, another fundamental part of kundalini tantra yoga is the use of bandhas, or body locks. In the past, I have discussed the most important lock, the Root Lock, and how it's clever use can greatly enhance any yoga practice. You will find that discussion in the article [5 Simple Yoga Tips to Elevate Your Practice](#). Now I am going to take the use of Body Lock exercises to the next level, and discuss the use of the advanced tantric technique, Triple Lock or Maha Bandha, for advancing your yoga expertise.

Maha Bandha, which literally means the Great Lock, is the combination of Root Lock (Moola Bandha), Diaphragm Lock (Uddiyana Bandha) as well as Neck Lock (Jalandhara Bandha).

In the video below I demonstrate Maha Bandha, specifically for enhancing the benefits of the wonderful White Tantra Yoga exercise Sat Kriya. Sat Kriya is essentially a powerful technique for transmuting sexual energy to higher rates of vibration, so it can be used by the higher centers for personal and spiritual evolution. You will find all the details for Sat Kriya in the following article, [Tantric Yoga Technique to Raise Sex Energy - Sat Kriya](#). But Maha Bandha can be used in conjunction with other exercises as well, and is also a viable practice on it's own for encouraging the movement of Kundalini up the central spinal channel (Shushumna).

All schools of yoga use Maha Bandha and it will be part of our ongoing free online [Kundalini Yoga Exercises and Poses](#) e-book and the [Hatha Yoga Poses](#) e-book.

Let me first give you the video demonstrating Maha Bandha and then below I will discuss numerous details regarding this tantric exercise.

Tantric Yoga Exercise - Video Demonstration of Maha Bandha

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

[Tantric Yoga Technique for Channeling Sexual Energy](#)

How Maha Bandha Works:

In the video above, I show Maha Bandha being applied after doing Sat Kriya, and in this rare case it is being done with breath held in, but in general one should do Maha Bandha with breath held out. This is primarily due to Diaphragm Lock which can be uncomfortable to do with breath held in. If you find this to be the case for yourself, you can do Maha Bandha with breath held out after Sat Kriya as well.

To understand Maha Bandha completely one has to delve quite deep into Tantric theory and practice. I will briefly go over the mechanism by which these locks work. Essentially, each lock targets a particular knot or granthi in the energetic channels. These knots are responsible for preventing the movement of Kundalini up the spine and to the higher centers. The application of the Bandha is to break these psychic knots and free Kundalini to rise.

Root lock breaks the Brahma Granthi in the lower spine and is associated with the Root and Sex Chakras. Diaphragm Lock breaks the Vishnu Granthi, along the middle spine and is associated with the Navel and Heart Chakras. The final knot is Rudra Granthi, associated with the Throat and Third Eye Chakras and is pierced by the use of Neck Lock. Piercing this final knot, can be seen as the ultimate aim of Kundalini Yoga. So Maha Bandha is a technique by which one directly works to dissolve these knots and promote the rise of Kundalini.

For more information on the Chakras, you can study the following article: [Kundalini Yoga Seven Chakra System Overview](#).

Below are the benefits of this tantric technique and how to practice it. In the practice section, I only go over Maha Bandha, please refer to the article on Sat Kriya linked to above, for details on how to practice Maha Bandha in conjunction with Sat Kriya.

Benefits of Maha Bandha:

- Awakens Kundalini Shakti, and sequentially allows this energy to travel up the spine, activating each chakra and opening up the higher centers.
- Balances the entire endocrine system.
- Promotes deep relaxation and stress relief.
- Improves the respiratory, digestive and nervous systems.
- Promotes a meditative state of mind.
- Promotes spiritual evolution.

Maha Bandha Practice - Advanced Tantric Technique:

- I will explain how to practice Maha bandha using the more common method with breath held out. Also, in the instructions below, I suggest using Sukh Asana (simple cross legged), but in the video I am demonstrating it in Rock Pose, as that is how it is done after Sat Kriya.
- Sit with your legs crossed and close your eyes.
- Elongate your spine upwards. Sit up nice and tall.

- Take a deep breath and then exhale completely.
- Now with the breath held out. Apply the following locks in sequence.
- **Root Lock** (Mula Bandha): To apply root lock you should contract the rectum, sex organ and naval (lower abdominal region) by pulling these 3 muscle groups up and in.
- **Diaphragm Lock** (Uddiyana Bandha): To apply diaphragm lock you should pull the abdominal muscles up and in under the rib cage. Suck your stomach all the way in.
- **Neck Lock** (Jalandhara Bandha): To apply neck lock draw your chin back firmly and slightly down (like a soldier at attention) creating tension in the back of the neck and causing a compression of the throat region.
- Hold these locks with your breath held out, for as long as comfortable. Then release them as you inhale and relax.
- Repeat again for a total of 3 rounds initially. As you become more proficient, you can increase the number of rounds to 10 or more.

Maha Bandha - Tantra Yoga Technique Hints & Tips

- The first rule of practicing Maha Bandha, is not to over do it. Please start off gently and slowly and build up your capacity systematically over time. Don't squeeze too hard and don't hold for too long. Please refer to the following articles for more guidance: [10 Important Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#).
- If you are interested in more tantric techniques associated with sex and sexuality, you can check out the [Tantra & Sex](#) category

here on [Mastery of Meditation](#).

- Sat Kriya is chapter 10 of the [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Sets E-book](#), where you will find many other interesting and helpful yoga sets and techniques. Including the following advanced set, which uses the Bandhas in a powerful way to awaken Kundalini: [Raja Yoga Set for Kundalini Awakening](#).

Raja Yoga Set for Awakening Kundalini

This Kundalini Yoga Kriya hails from the Regal path of Yoga -- Raja Yoga. It is a powerful kriya (set) and you should approach it with respect and intelligence. The kriya uses the combined power of breath control (pranayama), specifically suspension of breath, in conjunction with Body Locks (Bandhas) to awaken and channel Kundalini Shakti (energy) from the lower centers (chakras) to the higher ones. You should practice this set by using the modifications provided and move to the more advanced techniques only after mastering and feeling physically comfortable with the easier versions.

This kundalini yoga kriya, uses all three bandhas -- root lock (mula bandha), abdominal lock (uddiyana bandha) and neck lock (jalandhara bandha) -- to propel kundalini from one chakra to the next in sequence. The energy is brought first to the lower chakras (root, sex, naval) activating them, then moved to the heart chakra and throat chakra, and finally to the 3rd eye and crown chakra.

Benefits of Kundalini Awakening Raja Yoga Kriya:

As Kundalini is channeled upwards, the organs, glands and nerve junctions along the path are targeted with energy and their functioning rejuvenated and improved. Although this set helps the digestive, respiratory and circulatory systems, it is especially effective in strengthening your nervous system. Furthermore, this set helps bring energy into the brain region promoting greater power of awareness and intelligence.

Description of Kundalini Awakening Raja Yoga Kriya:

The following 3 body locks will be used in the practice of this kundalini yoga kriya so I will describe them first and then provide the details for the set.

Root Lock (Mula Bandha): To apply root lock you should contract the rectum, sex organ and naval (lower abdominal region) by pulling these 3 muscle groups up and in.

Abdominal Lock (Uddiyana Bandha): To apply abdominal lock (also called diaphragm lock) you should pull the abdominal muscles up and in under the rib cage.

Neck Lock (Jalandhara Bandha): To apply neck lock draw your chin back and slightly down (like a soldier at attention) creating tension in the back of the neck and causing a compression of the throat region.

Triple Lock (Maha Bandha): Maha Bandha is when all 3 locks above are applied together.

There are some variations to the locks described above, but for this set they should be applied as described.

Beginners version of Kundalini Awakening Raja Yoga Kriya:

- Sit up straight with your legs crossed (sukh asana). You can sit on a chair as well, but sukh asana is preferred.
- Hold onto your knees with your hands. This is called Drona Mudra.

- Inhale deeply, then exhale and while holding your breath Out, apply and release Root Lock 1 time(s).
- Now inhale, then exhale and while holding your breath out, apply and release Root Lock plus Abdominal Lock 1 time(s). So apply both locks together and release them together, not one at a time.
- Now inhale, then exhale and while holding your breath out, apply and release Root Lock, plus Abdominal Lock, plus Neck Lock 1 time(s).
- Inhale, then exhale and repeat the entire cycle increasing the count by 1 to 2, 3, 4... up to 8. So for each count you will do just Root Lock, then Root Lock + Abdominal Lock, then Root Lock + Abdominal Lock + Neck Lock.
- Once you finish the 8 count, inhale and interlace your fingers having the index finger pointing upward. They raise your arms straight up such that the upper arms are hugging your ears. Now exhale again and while holding your breath out, apply Triple Lock (Maha Bandha). Hold Maha Bandha with breath held out while stretching up with your arms. At the same time visualize energy flowing up your spine from the base to the crown of your head. Hold as long as comfortable and then release.
- Relax on your back in Shav Asana (corpse pose) for 5 minutes.

Intermediate version of Kundalini Awakening Raja Yoga Kriya:

- All the steps are the same as the beginner version, except work from a count of 1 all the way to 12. In addition, apply Maha Bandha with extended arms and visualization 3 times. Each time holding with breath held out for as long as comfortable. Don't forget to relax in shav asana at the end :-).

Advanced version of Kundalini Awakening Raja Yoga Kriya:

- All the steps are the same as the intermediate version, except work from a count of 1 all the way to 16. Again you will apply Maha Bandha 3 times at the end and relax afterwards.

Hints, Tips and Cautions for Kundalini Awakening Raja Yoga Kriya:

- Students very much liked this kriya during our Kundalini Yoga teacher's training course, but at the same time this is the one kriya which has also created difficulty for students in my classes. So, take your time as you develop mastery over this set. Move ahead systematically. Any pranayama exercise that requires breath suspension should be approached with caution.
- Since this set is stirring Kundalini a little more directly, you should generally be in good health and good physical condition before undertaking its practice.

Chapter 14: Meditation Techniques

Top 10 Profound Benefits of Meditation

Benefits of Meditation

Meditation is an art that has been around since the dawn of the age of man. This is not a statement to be brushed over. After all, many things about mankind have changed over time, but the profound art of meditation is something we have clung to dearly. This is because there is no substitute for meditation. Nothing else, single handedly, bestows the many wonderful blessings that meditation brings... in fact nothing else even comes close. In this article I will outline the top 10 benefits that meditation brings and hopefully it will inspire all to learn and practice this timeless art.

1. Enlightenment:

This is the one ultimate purpose of meditation. To help you discover the True Non-Dual Nature of Reality. To make you realize that your True Self is Divine and One with God.

2. Peace & Tranquility:

The mind of one who meditates is like the easy, leisurely flow of the Ganges River, as compared to the ordinary mind, which is like Niagara Falls. In other words your mind is at peace, deeply silent and so you are at peace.

3. Wisdom:

Meditation opens up the channels of communication between all levels of your being. What this means is that you have access now to the guidance that is coming directly from your Divine Self. This link gives

rise to the flow of intuition and wisdom.

4. Joy & Happiness:

Meditation strips away the layers of false identity that mask your True Self from shining through. Once you eliminate these false egos and stop catering to their nonsense you can reside in your True Nature. This brings forth joy and happiness as it allows you to be at ease with life, existence and yourself.

5. Love & Compassion:

As meditation reveals to you the interconnectedness of all humanity a great sense of compassion and love will spontaneously emerge. Knowing that deep within we are all divine in nature will change the way you view the apparent differences you see in others. This will also dramatically improve your relationships both intimate and casual.

6. Stress Reduction & Good Health:

This goes hand in hand. As meditation teaches you the art of living in the present moment, anxiety and worry fade more and more into the background. This state of relaxed awareness is most beneficial, to not only helping the body heal itself, but also for preventing illness and disease by eliminating the poison of stress.

7. Improved Brain Function:

All serious meditators know how much their brain function has been enhanced by meditation. Empirical studies every day are indicating this link. Meditation will undoubtedly increase your awareness and will significantly increase your intelligence.

8. Discover Your Purpose & Gifts:

As you start to drop the aspects of you that are artificial and pretentious you will begin to see the real you. The natural parts that are not put on will emerge. This will give you insight into who you really are and what you really love in life. That is the secret of mastering the art of living and discovering your true talents, gifts and purpose. That which you love, you do for its own sake without the need for reward or accolades. Once this is discovered, life can be lived with passion, zeal and independence.

9. Yogic and Psychic Powers:

We currently use only about 10% of our brain capacity. The practice of Yoga and Meditation awakens those regions of the Brain that normally lie dormant. When these areas of the brain are activated the powers they hold are unleashed. Such powers, used wisely, can be of benefit to others and of help to you in making progress on the spiritual path.

10. Magnificence:

Charisma, Confidence, Courage, Character and Balance are all brought about by meditation. This leads to an individual who is immensely charming and magnetic. Best word I could think of to describe the collective affects of these personality improvements was Magnificent. Meditation will let your magnificence shine through.

Sound Awareness Meditation Technique

Free Online Guided Meditation Book for Daily Practice

Background of Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

This simple, yet profound meditation technique does not belong to any particular religion or sect. Its origins, generally, lie in the Eastern Philosophies and due to its effectiveness various schools of meditation have adopted it.

Tools required for Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

- An alarm clock, stopwatch or other time device.

Benefits of Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

Primary Benefits:

- Builds choiceless awareness of the present moment.
- Builds ability of detached observation - ability to let go.
- Silences the mind of thoughts.
- Provides insight into the workings of your mind.

Secondary Benefits:

- Develops the auditory system.
- Promotes health and wellbeing.

Cautions for Practicing Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

Your auditory system will improve significantly by practicing this meditation technique, so please protect your ears when exposing yourself to very loud places as you will be more susceptible to sound induced hearing damage or tinnitus (ringing in the ears). If you feel the place is way too loud (like a dance club, rock concert, etc.) just use a common pair of ear plugs, they work fine.

Guided Sound Awareness Meditation Technique: Follow the step-by-step guided meditation below to practice this technique.

- Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. You may also lie on your back, sit on a chair or lean against a wall for this meditation.
- Set your alarm or other time device for 20 minutes.
- If sitting, elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes.
- Rest your hands in any comfortable position.
- Close your mouth, swallow your saliva creating a slight vacuum and place your tongue against the roof of your mouth. After this point there should be absolutely no more movement of the body. No fidgeting, scratching, shifting - nothing - be like you are frozen in time.
- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.
- Now bring your attention to your breath without trying to manipulate it further in any way, just become aware of its flow.

Spend a few minutes just observing it intimately till it starts to become regular and relaxed.

- At this point turn your attention to the ambient sounds in the environment. Slowly expand your awareness to the most distant sounds you can hear and start to pay close attention to them. Just listen to the actual sounds that are taking place without getting thinking involved as best you can. If the sound is constant, just attend to it, if it rises and then dissolves, notice that. **The quality of your attention should be that of a detached witness - you are just standing apart and listening to the music of life.** If you find yourself lost in a mental story line, notice those thoughts and then gently return your attention to the sounds you were attending to. Spend some time, up to five minutes or so listening to the far away sounds and then slowly bring you attention to sounds closer and closer to you. Continue this till you are listening to the sound of your breath or other sound in very close proximity to you. That is all there is to this simple, yet very effective meditation.

Hints and Tips for Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

- You can practice this meditation technique anywhere, so take advantage and experiment with it in various areas of your life.
- Try this meditation technique when it is raining, using the sound of the rain as the object of your careful attention. It helped reveal to me the secret below.

Secret of Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

This meditation technique is certainly designed to bring you into the present and develop your power of detached observation, but the illusion that this meditation works to dissolve is the illusion that there is an inside and an outside. Listen very, very carefully and you will

realize that all sounds are only taking place inside you. That everything is only taking place inside you. You are everything. Observer is the Observed. Tat Vam Asi - Thou Art That.

[So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique: Free Guided Meditation Book for Daily Practice](#)

Background of So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

The simple, yet profound, So Hum Meditation technique is probably one of the most popular Mantra Meditations. It emerges from the Yoga school of Hindu Philosophy and belongs in the category of Japa Meditations (Meditations that require the chanting of Mantras).

The So Hum (aka So Ham, Soham or Sohum) Mantra Meditation, done sincerely, is very effective in bringing about a complete transformation of individual consciousness. So Hum literally means "That I am " (So = "That" or "Thou" or "Divinity"; Hum = "I am") and the mantra's aim is to bring about this union (yoga) between your individual consciousness and Divine Consciousness. Another way to interpret this is that the meditation brings about the realization that all that you see is yourself — The Observer is the Observed.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

[So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique Video](#)

Tools Required for So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

- An alarm clock, stop watch or other time device.
- Or you can use a traditional bead necklace (Mala) to count repetitions if you prefer.

Benefits of So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

Primary Benefits:

- Realization of your Divine Nature.
- Realization of the non-dual Nature of Reality.
- Stress Reduction, Relaxation, Peace and Tranquility.
- Spontaneous Joy and Happiness.

Secondary Benefits:

- Promotes Self-Healing.
- Builds mental focus and concentration.

So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique Cautions:

- None.

Guided So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

Follow the step-by-step guided meditation below to practice this technique.

- Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. You may also sit on a chair or lie on your back to practice this meditation.
- Set your alarm or other time device for 10 to 20 minutes. If using a Mala (rotary\prayer beads) do the appropriate count (for a traditional 108 bead mala its about 1 full cycle through the mala).

- If sitting, elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in, like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Place your hands in Gyan Mudra (Gesture of Knowledge). Which is thumb and index finger lightly meeting, wrists resting gently on the knees and palms facing upward. The other 3 fingers are extended.
- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.
- Try to remain as still as possible.
- Now inhale slowly while saying the sound "Sooooo" mentally and then slowly exhale while silently saying the sound "Hummmmm".
- After spending about half the time in meditation as described above, start with every cycle to feel your awareness expanding and merging with the Universe Consciousness. So as you continue to chant silently the mantra in rhythm with your breath, feel its real meaning acting upon you.
- Continue for the duration of the meditation.
- At the end of the meditation, try to remain with the all inclusive awareness and sense that all is included in you.

So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique Tips:

- Another way to practice the So Hum Mantra Meditation is to visualize life, light and Divine energy flowing into you when you inhale and mentally say "Sooooo" and to feel your egocentric

limited consciousness flow out and evaporate into the atmosphere as you exhale and mentally say "Hummmmm". This variation is also consistent with the meaning of the Mantra.

- At you develop this practice increase the exhalation phase such that it grows to about two times the inhalation phase.

Secret of So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

Where did this Mantra come from? That is the secret of this Mantra. It is actually the sound of the breath during inhalation and exhalation. Inhalation sounds like "Soooooo", while exhalation sounds like "Hummmmm". So this is the music of life and by practicing this meditation we can learn to dance in tune with it.

Zen Meditation Technique - Practice & Hidden Secret - Free Guided Meditation

The Practice of Zen Meditation Technique - Zazen

The first meditation we will explore in the [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques E-Book](#) is the famous Zen Meditation Technique, also called Zazen or Breath Meditation. At the end of the meditation script I will reveal the real secret behind this most profound meditation technique.

**[THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:
Online Meditation Video Series for Daily Meditation Practice](#)**

Background of Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

This was the meditation technique of Lord Buddha - I should have to say no more in order to motivate you to try this meditation. It is one of the most widely used meditations in the world and is the heart of Zen Buddhist teachings. If one was to make a short list of the best meditation techniques, Zazen would most certainly make the top 10 list.

Tools required for Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

- Zafu (traditional Zen Buddhist meditation cushion), Smile Cushion or other firm meditation cushion. I purchased mine from zafu.net. I also purchased a zabuton (meditation mat) from them, a zabuton though is optional.
- Loose comfortable clothing.
- An alarm clock, stopwatch or other time device.

Benefits of Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

Primary Benefits:

- Builds Concentration and Focus.
- Self Knowledge - both, the workings of little self (ego) and awareness of the Big Self (True Divine Nature).
- Calmness.
- Compassion.
- Spontaneous Joy.

Secondary Benefits:

- Improves health and wellbeing.
- Increases willpower and builds character.
- Bestows psychic powers.

Cautions for Practicing Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

There are very few cautions with regard to Zazen practice, but the one I would like to point out has to do with emotional storms.

There can be periods of time, either during a single sitting or spanning across several weeks, when emotions you may have suppressed rise up to the surface and force you to deal with them. During these turbulent times, don't exacerbate the issue by chewing on the emotion laden thoughts that come up. Traumatizing yourself in this way has no value. Instead, sit with the emotions and related thoughts without

resistance, and then let them go and return your awareness to your breath.

This emotional cleansing is due to the visibility of the subconscious mind once the conscious mind is quieted by the meditation. In the short term, this can be a difficult time to go through, but in the long term it's a necessary and healthy cleansing that will promote greater peace, depth, joy and clarity in your life.

Guided Basic Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

- Find a quiet place and sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. If using a zafu or similar meditation cushion, sit on the forward third of the cushion. The objective is for your hips to be raised above your knees and to form a three-point base with your knees and buttocks touching the floor.
- Set your alarm or other time device for 20 minutes.
- Now elongate your spine upwards and to align it with the back of your head, subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. There will be a slight inward arch in your lower back.
- Now rock gently from side to side in big arcs, making them smaller and smaller till you drift to a stop. You should find yourself perpendicular to the floor with no tension or pull from either side.
- Have your eyes half open with an unfocused gaze on the floor in front of you. You should be looking down at a 45-degree angle about 2 to 3 feet in front of you. You may also close your eyes if you prefer.
- Bring your hands to your lap and place them in the cosmic mudra. To do this rest your right hand on your lap, then rest

your left hand on top of it and have your fingers overlap. Now bring the thumb tips together thus forming an oval frame.

- Close your mouth, swallow your saliva creating a slight vacuum and place your tongue against the roof of your mouth. After this point there should be absolutely no more movement of the body. No fidgeting, scratching, shifting - nothing - be like you are frozen in time.
- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.
- Now bring your attention to your breath without trying to manipulate it further in any way, just become aware of its flow. Spend a few minutes just observing it intimately till it starts to become regular and relaxed.
- At this point begin counting your breath. Count an inhalation as one, then the exhalation as 2 and continue to count your breaths until you reach 10. At which point return to 1 with the next inhalation. If at any point you get caught in a mental story line and lose your count, gently, without passing any judgment, return to 1 and start over. That's it, continue for the duration of the meditation.

Guided Intermediate Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

Follow all the steps for the Basic Zen Meditation Technique, except for the last step a complete inhalation and exhalation cycle should be counted as 1. So you will do 10 full cycles of inhalation and exhalation before returning to 1. You can also increase the time to 30 - 40 minutes.

Guided Advanced Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

Follow all the steps for the Basic Zen Meditation Technique, except for the last step instead of counting the breaths, just "be the breath". Don't try to jump to this step too soon, first build your concentration and focus. You can also increase the time to 1 hour.

Hints and Tips for Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

- Do some stretching or Yoga before sitting in zazen. It will help your body adjust better.
- Be regular, the benefits of this meditation are vast, but they take time to manifest.
- Some good internet resources and books on Zen meditation and Zen teachings are listed below...
 1. Charlotte Joko Beck's [Ordinary Mind Zen School](#) and her book *Everyday Zen: Love & Work*
 2. [Zen Mountain Monastery](#) - Mountain and Rivers Order of Zen Buddhism
 3. Shunryu Suzuki's [San Francisco Zen Center](#) and his book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*

Secret of Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

- The secret of zazen does not lie in the awareness of the inhalation or the exhalation. It lies in the gap *in between these breaths*. It lies when the breath is *spontaneously* suspended. It is in this gap where the mysteries of the Universe are hidden. This gap and the gap between 2 thoughts are best friends, and

in this silence between 2 thoughts the absolute is revealed.
Don't try to force this pause, just continue with your zazen, it
will come about naturally.

Opening Third Eye (Ajna) Chakra Meditation Technique for Psychic Powers

Chakra Meditation Technique to Open Third Eye

The second guided meditation technique we will explore in the [Free Online Guided Meditation E-Book](#) is a widely used and accepted method for opening, activating and balancing the mysterious and powerful Ajna Chakra (Third Eye). It is the potent AUM Mantra meditation technique.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK:

[AUM Meditation to Rapidly Open Third Eye](#)

Background of Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

The Ajna Chakra is the sixth chakra of the [Kundalini Seven Chakra System](#). A chakra is an energy vortex, which resides in a particular location of the body and governs the organs and glands of that region. A Chakra is also associated with certain traits and characteristics of the personality and forms a bridge between mind, body and spirit.

The Ajna Chakra (or Third Eye) eye lies at the very top of spine in the medulla oblongata. It relates to the pituitary gland, the pineal gland, the nasociliary nerve plexus and frontal lobes of the brain.

[Chakra Meditation](#) means to activate and balance a particular chakra, thus improving the functioning of everything in that particular region as well as refining the associated personality traits and characteristics. In some cases [psychic powers](#) associated with a particular chakra are also unleashed.

Ajna Chakra literally means "To Command". This chakra is also called the "Third Eye" as the activation gives one the power of intuitive knowledge. In addition, it is called the "Guru Chakra" as its activation connects one to the "Inner Guru". Similarly, it is also called "Eye of Shiva" or "The Divine Eye" for its awakening implies the higher stages of meditation and wisdom.

Each chakra can be activated by several means. In this guided meditation we will use the physical trigger point of the chakra (kshetram) as a point of concentration to activate it. In addition, each chakra is associated with a particular seed sound (Beej Mantra), which can be utilized to awaken it. For the Ajna Chakra the Beej Mantra is the primordial sound "OM" (AUM) and this guided meditation will be using that as well.

Tools required for Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

- An alarm clock, stopwatch or other time device.

Benefits of Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Primary Benefits:

- Builds the power of intuition.
- Bestows and increases Psychic Powers.
- Increases and refines awareness.
- Provides clarity of thought, insights and wisdom.
- Allows one to connect to the "inner guru" or "higher self" for guidance and inspiration.

- Builds the Yogic Mind or Neutral Mind, which is free from attachments of the ego.
- Build the power to read others and detect their subtle and gross energetic conditions.
- Promotes flow of [Kundalini Energy](#) into the higher centers.

Secondary Benefits:

- Promotes the ability to have Lucid Dreams.
- Allows for non-verbal communication.
- Builds focus and ones pointedness of the mind.
- Improves your vision.
- Promotes health and wellbeing.

Cautions for Practicing Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Do not strain when holding shambhavi yoga mudra (detailed below).

Guided Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Follow the step-by-step guided meditation below to practice this technique:

- Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. You may also sit on a chair or lean against a wall for this meditation.
- Set your alarm or other time device for 20 minutes.

- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in, like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.
- Keeping the head straight look up at an imaginary point in the middle of your forehead, just above the eyebrows. This eye position is called shambhavi yoga mudra. Close your eyes while holding this mudra. Do not strain excessively.
- Rest your hands in any comfortable position; you can place them on your knees.
- Try to remain as still as possible.
- Now inhale deeply and begin to chant in a soft, slow, steady voice the mantra OM (pronounced AUM). One chant of OM (AUM) Mantra should last for the entire exhalation. It is a long "Oh", followed by a semi long "Mmmm" during each exhalation. Once all the air has been expelled, inhale fully again and begin to chant the mantra once more. Visualize the OM sound coming from a point in the middle of the forehead just above the eyebrows and emanating throughout your entire body.
- Continue for the duration of the meditation. If your eyes tire from shambhavi yoga mudra release the mudra but continue to chant the OM (AUM) mantra as above. Reapply the mudra again when ready.
- Once you have completed the meditation, rub the palms of your hands together to make them warm and place them on your eyes as you open them slowly. This will relax and comfort your eye muscles.

Hints and Tips for Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

- There are many variations to OM (AUM) Mantra chanting for the activation of Ajna Chakra. I will provide a variation that only requires silently chanting OM Mantra and therefore can be practiced almost anywhere. Follow all steps from the guided meditation above except instead of chanting OM (AUM) Mantra out loud, as you inhale chant "Oh" silently, while visualizing the sound flowing into Ajna Chakra from your forehead and then silently chant "Mmmm" as you exhale, visualizing the sound leaving your forehead from Ajna Chakra. The rest is the same as the guided meditation above.

Secret of Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Many women today are actually practicing Ajna Chakra Meditation without even knowing it. This is resulting from the tradition of wearing a bindi. A bindi is the colorful decorative dot placed in the middle of the forehead and was originally designed to provide continual stimulation to Ajna Chakra by way of its Kshetram (physical trigger point). So next time you wear a bindi, remember that not only does it look oh so fine, but it is also raising your level of awareness and consciousness - not bad for a dot.

[Meditation for Improving Concentration](#)

Concentration Meditation Technique - Trataka

I have mentioned this timeless meditation technique briefly in several articles on Mastery of Meditation before, but now I would like to provide all the details regarding it, in order to help you learn and master it.

This meditation method is called Trataka or candle flame gazing, and it was introduced in the following 2 articles: [Brain Development & Enlightenment Series Part 1: Awaken the Senses](#) and [Yoga Meditation Techniques - The Top 3](#). It is now the eight guided meditation of our [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques Book](#).

Although Trataka is famous for being a meditation to build concentration, it has a solid list of other great benefits as well, which I will detail below. This meditation technique comes from the school of Yoga, and has been widely embraced due to it's simplicity and effectiveness.

Tools for Trataka - Concentration Meditation Technique:

- Candle, candleholder and lighter/matches.

Benefits of Trataka - Concentration Meditation Technique:

Primary Benefits:

- Terrific for building and improving concentration.
- Builds mental fortitude, mental focus and willpower.
- Calms the mind and bestows inner peace.

- Stimulates and activates the Third Eye Chakra (Ajna Chakra) to bestow wisdom, intuition and psychic powers.
- Helps penetrate the veil of duality and see the non-dual nature of Reality.

Secondary Benefits:

- Improves the visual system.

Cautions for Trataka - Meditation for Concentration:

- Be careful not to strain the eyes excessively when practicing this method.

Instructions for Practicing Trataka - Meditation for Concentration:

- Sit up in any comfortable relaxed position, preferably with the spine straight. You may also sit on a chair to practice this meditation.
- To practice this meditation you must hold absolutely still.
- Place your hands in Gyan Mudra. Such that the thumb tips and index finger are meeting, while the other three fingers are extended. Rest your wrists gently on your knees with the palms facing slightly upward. Gyan mudra will help you with your concentration.
- Make sure the room is darkened and there is no breeze of any kind.
- Light the candle and ensure that it is about 3 feet away from you and at eye level. You may need to use a long candleholder to

accomplish this.

- Begin to gaze, without blinking, steadily at the candle flame for as long as comfortable.
- Once the eyes tire or start to tear up, close them and then position the afterimage of the flame between the eyebrows at the center of the forehead (the physical trigger point of the Third Eye Chakra).
- Focus on this afterimage, trying to keep it steadily fixed in the region of the Third Eye Chakra described above. Your level of concentration will determine the clarity of the afterimage. If the image wavers, moves or loses clarity, just reapply your concentration and restore the position.
- Once the image fades out completely, open your eyes and begin again focusing on the candle flame.
- Continue this cycle for 5-10 minutes.
- As your capacity to concentrate and meditate grows, increase the time by increments of 5 minutes till you reach 20 minutes. You may do this meditation even longer if you like. It is not uncommon to practice this technique for up to 1 hour, by those who are passionate about building concentration and mental focus.

Meditation tips for Trataka - Meditation for Concentration:

- Try to get a decent size flame (make sure the wick is of good length). It will help prolong the afterimage and make it easier to practice the concentration portion of the meditation.

- Don't strain the eyes during the gazing period. Over time your eyes will adjust and allow you to concentrate on the flame for longer periods of time.

Beautiful Light Meditation for Joy and Creativity

Visualization Meditation Technique

Today we will explore the Light Meditation Technique, which is part of the 10 Bodies of Light Yoga model. The 10 Bodies of Light is the basis of Yoga Numerology and a great way to understand what your strengths, weaknesses and challenges are in this life, thus helping you achieve your highest human potential. I have discussed this model in the following link and talked about how it is used in Numerology, in relation to your Master Numbers and birth date ([Numerology Readings and Master Number Analysis](#)). In my view, a key aspect of such readings is the techniques one uses to balance and heal the indicated bodies. This is what I call a transformation program. The transformation program generally consists of meditations, yoga poses and breathing exercises from the rich schools of Kundalini Yoga and Hatha Yoga, such as this Light Meditation.

The Light Meditation is used to heal and balance the Subtle Body, which is the ninth body in the 10 Bodies of Light model. This is the beautiful technique and it is excellent for those interested in expanding their artistic, creative, intuitive and subtle aspects.

The Light Meditation Technique falls under the category of visualization meditations and is suitable for anyone to practice. As it involves imagination and visualization though, it is particularly enjoyable to artists, psychics, creative personalities and those who are visually or mentally oriented. The meditation involves certain mudras (hand and body positions) to help it achieve its goals, but it's primary mechanism lies in your ability to use your mind and creative powers.

Light Meditation Technique will be the 17th entry in our ongoing and popular [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques E-book](#). As it is

also considered a Kundalini Yoga Kriya, I will include it in the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Kriyas E-Book](#), as well as the newly launched [Free Kundalini Yoga Meditations E-book](#). Also, as always please follow all guidelines for meditation and yoga practice as I have laid out in the [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#) and [Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#).

Benefits of Light Meditation Technique:

1. Increases intuitive abilities and psychic powers.
2. Helps one penetrate the mysteries of the Universe.
3. Promotes joy and inner peace.
4. Increases one's artistic and creative abilities.
5. Helps expand awareness.
6. Promotes radiance and inner light.
7. Helps one develop mastery over the subtle sciences.

How to Do Light Meditation:

- Sit with your legs crossed with the hands in Gyan Mudra (thumb tip and index finger meeting, other three fingers pointing forward). You can also sit on a chair for this meditation.
- Place your hands in front of you as if holding a book for reading (elbows are bent, the forearms are angled upwards and palms facing you). Now slide the right hand about six inches further up than the left hand. The fingertips of the left hand will be in line with the wrist of the right hand. Hold this position.

- Now visualize yourself walking at the break of dawn in an open field. See above you a single morning star shining brightly in a still dark early morning sky. The light of a new day is just breaking in. Spend a few moments and immerse yourself fully into this scene.
- Now visualize a beam of pure white light emanating from the star and penetrating your Heart Chakra (middle of your sternum). Allow this beam of light to be a pathway leading up to the star and begin to walk up this pathway of light. Feel great calm and peace as you ascend this pathway of light.
- As you make your way up towards the morning star, repeat silently to yourself, "I am beautiful, I am light." Continue to walk on this beam of light repeating this phrase mentally. Feel yourself merging more and more into the light, feel yourself become more subtle, more light, more aware, more beautiful, as you continue your journey upwards.
- Finally, take some deep breaths, holding each breath in for as long as comfortable and feel yourself becoming one with light. Feel yourself becoming a being of pure light, beauty and awareness.
- To end, feel bright, beautiful and full of light.

Summary of Light Meditation:

You will notice that no time limit has been given for Light Meditation, as that is open and up to you. Do the meditation for as long as you enjoy 😊. I would suggest starting with at least 3 minutes though. For those who have inquired, I am putting together a comprehensive training program on how to become a Master Numerologist, so that those of you, who are interested in learning this great science, will have the opportunity to do so. The Light Meditation above is an

example of a transformation technique that will of course be included in the certification program. The program is not just designed to teach you Numerology, but in it I will also share my knowledge on how to succeed in this arena. One last note is that a good Numerologist should also have refined intuitive abilities, and for that this Light Meditation is a great technique to practice, so while you wait for the program to go live, I suggest giving this meditation some serious attention.