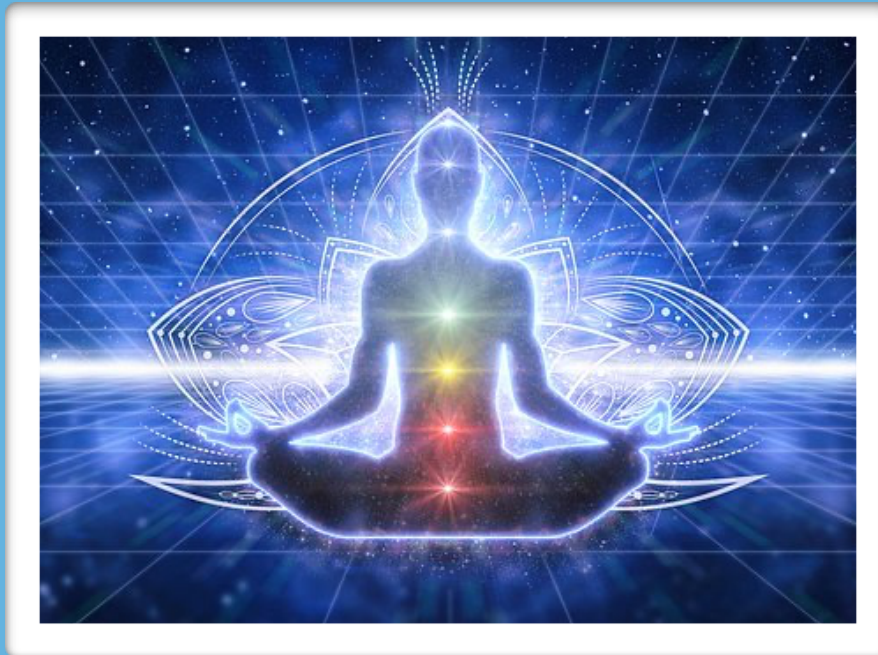


# TOTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Mudra Therapy, Yogasana, Pranayama and Meditation

Spices of Life, Fruits of the Earth and Vegan Vegetables



**REDDIGARI SESHADRI REDDY**

# TOTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

## Mudra Therapy, Yogasana, Pranayama and Meditation

### Spices of Life, Fruits of the Earth and Vegan Vegetables

First edition: Year 2020

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- 7) Travails of Travel: ISBN 978-93-5311-851-8
- 8) Gods and Aliens: ISBN 978-93-5408-133-0

Printed at Sri Kalanjali Graphics, Hyderabad, India



Anika Publications, Hyderabad

Price: India - Rs 500; Elsewhere - US \$ 20

ISBN: 978-93-5419-388-0



978-93-5419-388-0

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## Prologue:

In view of the recent Covid pandemic, there has been much debate about preventive measures to avoid infection. Apart from taking basic precautions such as “social distancing”, “washing Hands”, and “wearing a mask”, it is advisable to develop immunity to avoid infection. Better said than done! It can not be done overnight; one has to practice “Total Health Management” all times through out the life. Rewards will be great!

As the old adage goes “Health is wealth”. The word health refers to a state of complete emotional, physical and social well-being. There are many resources available to help people maintain optimal state of health. Good health is central to handling stress, living longer, and leading an active life besides ensuring good health of future generations. Health is an ability of a body to adapt to new threats such as a climate change, an epidemic or a pandemic. Regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and adequate rest all contribute to good health. Mental health is as important as physical health. Good physical health working in tandem with mental health can enhance overall quality of a person’s life.

Genetic factors also affect one’s state of health as many people are born with a variety of genes. In some people, an unusual genetic pattern can lead to pre-disposition to ill-health. Environmental factors also play a major role in people’s health. An environmental trigger may cause illness in a person who has an increased genetic risk of a particular disease. Other factors include those of social, economic or physical environment; not to speak of an individual’s life-style. So the subject of health is complex and needs to be tackled in several ways. A chapter titled “How to live longer” is included in this book to addresses this issue. Although the Benjamin Franklin’s axiom that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” was originally addressing fire safety issue, many use this quote when referring to health.

This concept of “TOTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT (THM)” is analogous to the concept of “TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) as practiced in a business enterprise - quality must be maintained in all aspects of the organisation at all stages - to ensure excellent quality in the final product or service. Likewise, we need to maintain good quality in our ‘food intake’, ‘the environment we live in’, ‘physical and mental activities’ etc. to maintain excellent overall health.

The following allied subjects are covered - albeit in a concise manner - in this book titled:

### “TOTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT”

- Mudra Therapy
- Benefits of Spices used in food
- Nutrition of Fruit Diet
- Nutrition of Vegetables
- Yogasana
- Pranayama
- Meditation
- Basic Requisites: “How to live longer”

Reddigari Seshadri Reddy

1st October, 2020



# MUDRA THERAPY



# MUDRA THERAPY



## INTRODUCTION:

The “*yoga mudra*” practice in Bharat has been in existence since Vedic times. Hindu ancient texts about yoga were compiled by our ‘*Rishis*’ of yore. A mudra is a symbolic or ritual gesture or pose in Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. While some mudras involve the entire body, most are performed with the hands and fingers. In “*hatha yoga*”, mudras are used in conjunction with pranayama, generally while in seated posture, to stimulate various parts of the body involved with breathing and to effect flow of ‘*prana*’ or consciousness in the body.

Many statues of Buddha depict various mudra postures. As well as being spiritual gestures employed in the iconography and spiritual practice of Indian religions, mudras have meaning in many forms of Indian dance and yoga. The range of mudras used in each field or religion differs, but with some overlap. In addition, many of the Buddhist mudras are used outside South Asia and have developed different local forms elsewhere.

Mudra means gesture. Mudras done with hands and fingers are called “*Hasta Mudras*”.

***The body is made of 5 elements: Fire, Air, Space, Earth and Water.***

When these elements are out of balance our life force gets deranged and we suffer from some ailments. Mudra Therapy is very effective in curing various ailments, charted here.

Disclaimer: Please consult a yoga professional before practicing a particular mudra. Detailed analysis of yoga mudra practice is not in the scope of this booklet and this is only an abridged version for orientation of the readers.

*The energy from the body radiates mainly through the tips of nose, lips, fingers, and toes.*



The five fingers represent the following elements:

Thumb – Fire (Agni)

Index finger – Air (Vayu)

Middle finger – Ether (Aakash - space)

Ring

finger – Earth (Prithvi)

Small finger – Water (Jal)

When the thumb is in contact with other fingers, energy is directed to vitalise various parts of the body. The thumb (Fire element) is the most important one. If the fire element is deranged, entire body is deranged. Death ensues death of fire element.

Joining the fire element (thumb) with other elements (other fingers) rejuvenates other elements.

### **Important Notes:**

1. When the tip of the thumb joins the tip of other fingers the relevant *tatvas* get balanced. *Tatva* is a Sanskrit word meaning ‘thatness’, ‘principle’, ‘reality’ or ‘truth’

2. When the tip of the thumb joins the base of other fingers, the relevant *tatvas* are enhanced.

3. When the tip of a finger touches the base of the thumb, the relevant *tatva* gets diminished.

4. Generally, unless specified otherwise, the hands should face upwards while doing Mudras.

5. Mudras must be practiced by both the hands, unless specified otherwise, for optimal results.

When a mudra is performed with right hand, left parts of the body are affected and vice-versa.

6. The mudras should be generally practiced for a period of 10-30 minutes, twice a day.

Best results are obtained if done for an hour (or twice a day for 30 minutes each) for a few days which is difficult but must be done in acute ailments which is worthwhile.

7. Only the tips of the relevant specified fingers in a mudra must be in touch and pressing is not required. Other fingers must be kept reasonably straight but not rigidly.

8. Mudras can be practiced while in meditation to increase the efficacy of Mudras.

9. Mudras improve mental health too; they calm the mind, reduce anger, and prevent addictions.

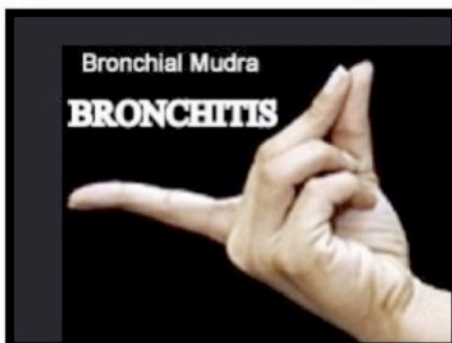
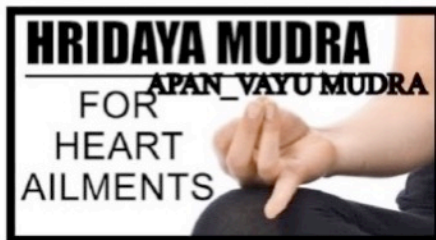
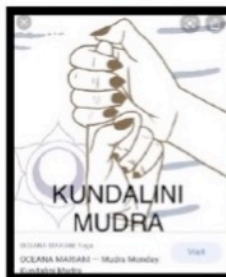
10. Before starting mudras, do slow and deep breathing for about a minute to relax the body and the mind.
11. Having faith is the most important aspect of practicing mudras.
12. The system was developed by our sages of yore after assessing results by practicing over centuries. The knowledge is believed to be gathered by sages by a meditative process. The postulate is that all knowledge is stored in the form of waves in space which can be accessed by deep meditation; as written knowledge can be lost, as footsteps in the sands of time.
13. Best time for mudra practice is early in the morning.
14. Generally, do not practice mudras for an hour after meals.
15. Select a mudra for practice for a specific requirement, need based as practicing all mudras is not practically possible nor is advisable.

#### An important Mudra: Matangi Mudra:

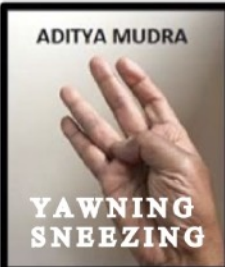
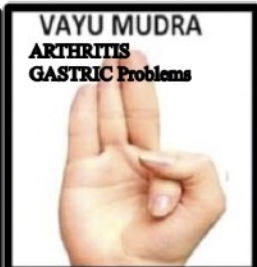
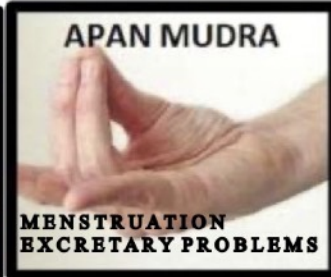


*Matangi* is one of the ten Tantric Goddesses known as *Mahavidyas*. She is thought to be a form of Parvati and Sarasvati, and she is considered to govern arts, music, speech and learning. In practicing *Matangi* mudra, it is possible to summon the power of *Matangi* in order to acquire mastery over the arts and cultivate inner strength. The physical benefits of *Matangi* mudra may be attributed to its stimulation of the hypothalamus. The heart, stomach, liver, duodenum, gallbladder, spleen, pancreas, and kidneys all benefit from this mudra, and it particularly aids in reducing spasms or aches in the stomach.

☑ Some Mudra Pictures are shown in the following pages with “INSET” indicating the corresponding benefit of the Mudra.

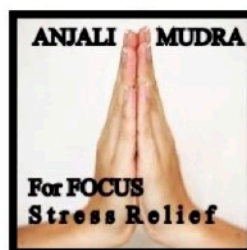
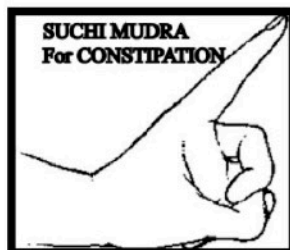
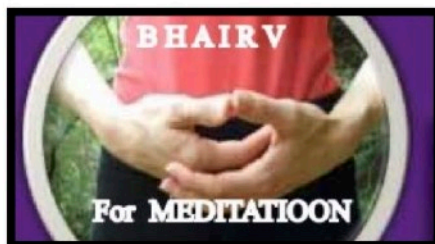
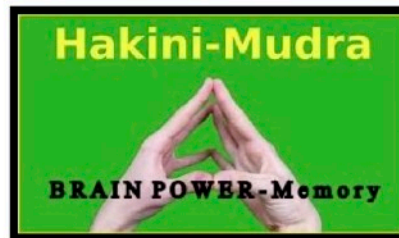


# MUDRA THERAPY





**MUDRA THERAPY**



### MUDRA THERAPY

 <p><b>YONI MUDRA</b> For Women</p> <p>Reproductive, Menstrual, Urinary Problems</p>	 <p><b>VISHNU MUDRA</b></p> <p>for STRESS, MENTAL CLARITY CONCENTRATION</p>	 <p><b>CHINMAYA MUDRA</b></p> <p>For Digestion, Energy</p>
 <p><b>PADMA-LOTUS MUDRA</b></p> <p>Depression, Piles Digestion</p>	 <p><b>HRIDAYA MUDRA</b></p> <p>For HEART HEALTH</p>	 <p><b>CHIN MUDRA</b></p> <p>For CONCENTRATION, Sleep, Backache</p>
 <p><b>BRAMARA MUDRA</b></p> <p>FOR ALLERGIES</p>	 <p><b>Adi Mudra</b></p> <p>SNORING Time Capacity</p>	 <p><b>BRAMHA MUDRA</b></p> <p>For STRESS, LUNGS, DIGESTION, CERVICAL Problems</p>

YOGA  
FOR  
ACIDITY & HEARTBURNS



### MUDRAS for DIGESTION and ACID REFLUX

Varun, Pushan, Samana, Apana and Vayu  
Mudras...

 <p><b>VAYU MUDRA</b></p> <p>Gastric, Arthritis</p>	 <p><b>APANA VAYU MUDRA</b></p> <p>Digestion and Heartburn</p>	 <p><b>PUSHAN MUDRA</b></p> <p>For Digestion and Acidity</p>
 <p><b>VARUN MUDRA</b></p> <p>Reduce Acid Reflux</p>	 <p><b>SAMANA MUDRA</b></p> <p>Digestion</p>	

Please refer to the following chart showing details of Ailment vis-a-vis indicative Mudra.

Sr No	AILMENT	MUDRA
1	Allergy, Respiratory, Bronchitis, Sneezing	<b>Bhramari</b>
2	Asthma	Ling, Surya
3	Backache	Apan, Vayu, Pran
4	Blood Disorder	Varun, Pran, Apan
5	<b>BP</b>	<b>Meao</b>
6	BP, Excess	Vyan
7	Brain Power	Purna, Hakini
8	Burning Sensation	<b>Varun, Apan</b>
9	Constipation	Apan
10	Constipation	Suchi
11	Cough and Cold	Ling, Surya
12	Dehydration	Varun
13	Depression	Gyan, Pran
14	Depression, Piles, Digestion	Padma (Lotus)
15	Diabetes	Pran, Apan
16	Diarrhea	Varun, Vayu, Apan
17	Digestion, Acidity, Acid Reflux	Apan, Varun, Pushan, Vayu, Varun, Samana
18	Digestion, Energy	Chinmaya
19	Earache	Akash
20	Earache, Dullness	Shunya
21	Fatigue,	Prithvi, Pran
22	Focus, Stress	Anjali
23	<b>Gastric, Arthritis</b>	<b>Vayu</b>
24	Gastro enteritis, Water Balance	Varun
25	Headache	Maha Sirs
26	<b>High BP</b>	<b>Akash, Pran, Meao</b>
27	Immunity, Concentration	Matsya
28	Immunity, Eye Health, Energy	Pran
29	<b>Insomnia</b>	<b>Shakti</b>
30	Kidney Problem	Apan

Sr No	AILMENT	MUDRA
31	Leg pain	Pran
32	Liver Problem	Surya, Sahaj, Sahaj Shank
33	Low BP	Akash, Pran, Ling, Apan
34	Memory Problem	Gyan
35	Menstruation	Apan
36	Mental Health	Gyan
37	Migraine	Gyan, Apan
38	Neck pain	Vayu
39	Obesity, Cholesterol	Surya
40	Paralysis	Vayu, Pran
41	Piles, Digestion	Sahaj Shank
42	Pneumonia	Ling, Surya
43	Psoriasis	Varun, Apan
44	Reproductive, Menstrual, Urinary	Yoni
45	Respiratory, Phlegm	Ling
46	Sciatica	Apan, Vayu, Pran
47	Sinusitis	Ling, Surya
48	Skin Problem	Varun
49	Sneezing, Yawning	Aditya
50	Snoring, Lung Capacity	Adi
51	Spine Problem	Vayu, Dhyan, Sahaj Shankh
52	Stress, Lungs, Digestion, Cervical	Bramha
53	Thirst	Varun, Pran
54	Thyroid Problem	Surya, Shank, Sahaj
55	Toothache	Apan, Akash
56	Tuberculosis	Ling, Surya
57	Voice, Stammering,	Shank

*note: Please visit some renowned websites / google for detailed information on benefits / procedure / precautions pertaining to any mudra, you may wish to practice.*

*Disclaimer: Please consult a yoga professional before practicing a particular mudra. Detailed analysis of yoga mudra practice is not in the scope of this book and this is only an abridged version for orientation of the readers.*

# SPICES OF LIFE



Image source: pixabay.com

# SPICES of LIFE

## \* Introduction:

Ancient writings on Ayurveda comprise, among other things, literature on the characteristics of spices and their effect on human health. Dhanvantari is the Hindu God of medicine and an avatar of lord Vishnu. As per the Puranas he is mentioned as the God of Ayurveda. Ayurveda is a gift to humanity from Dhanvantari, the physician of Gods.

A spice is a seed, fruit, root, bark, or other plant substance primarily used for flavoring or coloring food. Spices are distinguished from herbs, which are the leaves, flowers, or stems of plants used for flavoring or garnishing. Spices are often used in medicine, religious rituals, cosmetics or perfume production.

The adage “Variety is the Spice of Life” is very apt as can be seen from the large spectrum of benefits of various spices.

While Black Pepper is considered the King of Spices, the little green pods called Cardamom are known as the Queen of Spices.

## \* Historical Background:

The spice trade developed throughout the Indian subcontinent by at earliest 2000 BCE with cinnamon and black pepper, and in East Asia with herbs and pepper. The Egyptians used herbs for mummification and their demand for exotic spices and herbs helped stimulate world trade. By 1000 BCE, medical systems based upon herbs could be found in China, Korea, and India. Early uses were connected with, medicine, religion, tradition, and preservation. Cloves were used in Mesopotamia by 1700 BCE. The ancient Indian epic Ramayana mentions cloves.

The earliest written records of spices come from ancient Egyptian, Chinese, and Indian cultures. Indonesian spice merchants traveled around China, India, the Middle East, and the east coast of Africa. Arab merchants facilitated the routes through the Middle East and India.

Hundreds of years ago, traders considered black pepper the king of spices. Called “black gold,” it was one of the very first items of commerce between India and Europe.

Spices are primarily used as food flavoring. They are also used in perfumes cosmetics and incense. At various periods, many spices have been believed to have medicinal value. Since they are expensive, rare, and exotic commodities, their conspicuous consumption has often been a symbol of wealth and social class.



✳ **Production of Spices world-wide: INDIA is the King of Spices.**

Quantity in metric tonnes

Rank	Country	2010	2011
1	India	14,74,900	15,25,000
2	Bangladesh	1,28,517	1,39,775
3	Turkey	1,07,000	1,13,783
4	China	90,000	95,890
5	Pakistan	53,647	53,620
6	Iran	18,028	21,307
7	Nepal	20,360	20,905
8	Colombia	16,998	19,378
9	Ethiopia	27,122	17,905
10	Sri Lanka	8,293	8,438
—	<i>World</i>	19,95,523	20,63,472

*Source: UN Food & Agriculture Organization*

Because the spices tend to have strong flavours and are used in small quantities, they tend to add few calories to food, even though many spices, especially those made from seeds, contain high portions of fat, protein, and carbohydrate by weight. However, when used in larger quantity, spices can also contribute a substantial amount of minerals and other micronutrients, including iron, magnesium, calcium, and many others, to the diet. For example, a teaspoon of paprika contains about 1133 IU of Vitamin A, which is over 20% of the recommended daily requirement.

Cumin and turmeric have been shown to have powerful antioxidant and antimicrobial properties . They can be used against harmful bacteria in the body. Turmeric has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties and helps with heart disease, depression, and arthritis.

Garam masala is full of antioxidants which help in preventing skin problems and also help fight inflammation. Garam masala has carminative properties (relieving flatulence) and apart from boosting digestion, it also helps in fighting bloating, and even nausea.

Ginger can help decrease inflammation, stimulate digestion and suppress your appetite. These properties can help aid in weight loss and target belly fat when added to your diet. You can add ginger to hot water to create a tea. You can add it to foods for extra flavour as well as helping weight loss.

Garlic combats common cold, reduces blood pressure, improves cholesterol, and lowers the risk of heart diseases.

✔ ***Benefits of various spices are enumerated in this chapter as follows.***



## Top Indian Spices:

### 1. Turmeric (*Haldi*):



Turmeric's flavour contribution is distinct yet in the background. Perhaps more than the flavour, turmeric's real contribution is its health benefits and colour. Turmeric is typically added, as a powder, to a curry. Typically, turmeric takes only a teaspoon or two to flavour and colour a dish for a family of four. If you're using it for health purposes, make sure you include some black pepper in your recipe. Combination of turmeric and pepper result in better absorption and compounding health benefits.

Health benefits of turmeric:

- Anti-inflammatory
- Antioxidant
- Helps with heart diseases, depression and arthritis

### 2. Cumin (*Jira*):



Cumin is used in almost every Indian dish. We fry it in oil for most recipes, and use it in all versions of garam masala. Generally cumin is best used whole, and fried in oil at the beginning of a dish.

Health benefits of cumin:

- Contains antioxidants
- Has anticancer properties
- May help treat diarrhoea
- Helps control blood sugar
- Anti microbial - Fights bacteria and parasites
- Has an anti-inflammatory effect
- May help lower cholesterol
- Aids in weight loss

### 3. Green Cardamom (*Elaichi*):



Whole green cardamom is a key seasoning ingredient, one of those spices fried in hot oil at the beginning of cooking an Indian dish. Green cardamom is often used in traditional Indian sweets and in masala chai (spiced tea). They are also often used for flavouring and garnishing biryani and other dishes. Individual seeds are sometimes chewed for taste and for refreshing the mouth.

Health benefits of green cardamom:

- Antioxidant
- Contains cancer-fighting compounds
- Anti-Inflammatory
- May Help with digestive problems, including ulcers
- May treat bad breath and prevent cavities

### 4. Coriander Seeds (*Dhania*)



You can buy coriander in seeds or ground up into a brown powdered spice. Coriander is often used in Spanish, Mexican, Latin and Indian cuisine. It's a common ingredient in spice rubs, marinades, chilis, sauces, soups and curries and works well with onions, bell peppers, tomatoes and potatoes. It improves the flavour and taste of Dal, a staple food in India.

Health benefits of coriander seeds:

- Improves digestion: These seeds good for all your intestinal issues including bloating, gastric, diarrhoea, nausea etc.
- Lowers cholesterol
- Treats diabetics
- Improves hair and skin quality

**5. Cilantro - Coriander:**

The leaves of the plant, cilantro are indispensable as a flavourful garnish for virtually any dish, but go especially well with rich, deeply-flavoured dals and heartier meat dishes.

Health benefits of Cilantro - Coriander:

- Useful as a remedy for pain and inflammation
- Improves skin health; Prevents or reduces sun damage of the skin
- Has anti-fungal property
- Antioxidant
- Regulates of BP

**6. Garam Masala:**

Garam masala is actually a combination of spices including pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, cumin, coriander, Indian bay, pepper, and some others. It is the main ingredient in many dishes such as mutton curry, Chana Masala etc.

Health benefits of garam masala:

- Improves digestion
- Antioxidant
- Improves BP
- Reduces inflammation
- Lowers cancer risk
- Defends against bacteria
- Defends against diabetes
- Protects nervous system

### 7. Black Cardamom (*Kali Elaichi*):



Black cardamom has the aroma of green cardamom, except that the pods are much larger with more seeds. Black cardamom pods are also dried over a fire, and hence are blackened and smoky in flavour. There is no substitute for the unique fragrance of black cardamom. Recipes serving about 4 people usually only use two or three black cardamom pods whole. This spice is particularly important for Indian Biryani and is very often used whole to infuse the rice in the final stage of cooking. Black cardamom is largely used in savoury Indian dishes ranging from curries, stews, daals (lentil dishes).

Health benefits of black cardamom:

- Black cardamom helps prevent heart diseases. It helps control cardiac rhythm that balances the blood pressure and reduces the chances of developing blood clots
- If you suffer from oral health issues like cavity, mouth odour or bleeding gums chewing on black cardamom seeds maybe a one-stop-solution
- Black cardamoms help stimulate gastric and intestinal glands. They help secrete stomach juices that promote digestion. This further prevents conditions like gastric ulcers and acidity
- Contains vitamin C, an essential antioxidant

- **8. Ginger (*Adrak*):**



Ginger is an absolutely essential ingredient for most curries. You can use raw ginger, grated or minced and add it with your garlic after frying onions. Make sure you have peeled the ginger first. You may use ginger and garlic paste, instead. Ginger and Garlic mix is a great combination for improving flavour and taste of food.

Health benefits of ginger:

- Keeps your mouth healthy
- Ginger has antibacterial power
- Calms nausea
- Soothes sore muscles
- Eases arthritis symptoms
- Curbs cancer growth
- Lowers blood Sugar
- Eases period pains
- Lowers cholesterol
- Relieves indigestion
- Helps with osteoarthritis
- Anti inflammatory
- Eases menstrual pain
- Improves brain function

Drink the Kashayam (health Drink) in the morning on empty stomach for overall health:

Boil half a spoon of turmeric powder and 10 gm of ginger in a cup of water (filter); Add Honey and lime juice on cooling to warm temperature and drink.



**9. Garlic (*Lasun*):**

Garlic is an essential seasoning spice. Using garlic cloves between 5 and 10 cloves in a 4 person recipe will give you a good hearty garlic flavour. For a milder flavour, add it at the beginning when you start frying your onions, or for a sharper flavour, add it after your onions are soft, giving the garlic less cooking time.

Health benefits of Garlic:

- Garlic contains compounds with potent medicinal properties
- Garlic is highly nutritious but has very few calories
- Garlic can combat sickness, including the common cold
- Garlic Improves Cholesterol Levels, which lower the risk of heart disease
- Controls BP
- Boosts immune system; Reduces severity of cold and flu
- Reduces bone loss
- Adding a daily dose of garlic could help reduce your risk of osteoporosis and osteoarthritis.
- Improves memory
- Improves skin

**10. Asafoetida (*Hing*):**

Asafoetida smells a little strange.

To use hing (asafoetida), you must always add it to your frying pan when your oil or butter is hot. It should sizzle for about 5-10 seconds before adding onions, garlic, or ginger. For a meal of four, use about ¼ of a teaspoon of hing.

Health benefits of asafoetida:

- Reduces bloating and other stomach problems
- Relieves asthma
- Lowers BP
- Reduces menstrual pain
- Reduces headache
- Reduces acne
- Brings glow to the face

### 11. Fenugreek (*Methi*):



Fenugreek is a subtle spice. Tasting it on its own as a raw ingredient doesn't give you a ready understanding of where it might fit into your cooking, the seeds in particular have a bitterness. You may use the ground seeds or the leaves, and either one has a sweet/bitter flavour. The methi leaves are less prone to bitterness however, and have a delicious aroma. They can be used as a flavouring component in *chapathis*, minced meat, *curries*, *dal* and the like.

Health benefits of fenugreek:

- Lowers blood sugar levels
- Boosts testosterone
- Increases milk production in breastfeeding mothers
- Reduces cholesterol levels
- Improves digestion and appetite
- Controls constipation
- Controls gastritis
- Controls diabetes
- Reduces menstrual pain
- Prevents obesity

## 12. Mango Powder (*Amchoor*):



It's one of the favourite spices. If you find your dish is bland add *amchoor* to it. A teaspoon of *amchoor* will bring about as much sourness as a lemon. Health benefits of *amchoor* (mango powder)

Health benefits of Mango Powder:

- Improves digestion
- Helps to fight acidity
- Stimulates detoxification
- Improves eyesight
- Keeps heart healthy
- Treats And Prevents Scurvy
- Weight Loss
- Removes Acne

**13. Indian Bay (*Tej Patta*):**

It is included as a whole leaf and usually cooked for the length of the dish, removed just before serving. It's aromatic flavour is reminiscent of cinnamon and clove, but much more subtle with a leafy flavour of its own.

Health benefits of Indian Bay (*Tej Patta*):

- Helps In improving digestion
- Heart-Friendly
- Good for diabetics
- Relieves stress
- Protects your body from inflammation
- Natural wound healer.

**14. Cinnamon / Cassia Bark (*Dalchini*):**

Cassia bark is an ingredient you find in most Indian grocery stores. It is a relative of cinnamon, and you can use it in exactly the same way. Thus this advice goes for both cinnamon and cassia. Usually cinnamon and cassia bark are fried whole at the beginning cooking an Indian dish, and left in.

Health benefits of cinnamon:

- Antioxidant
- Anti-inflammatory
- Reduces risk of heart disease
- Improves sensitivity to the hormone insulin
- Lowers blood sugar; Has powerful anti-diabetic effect
- Beneficial effect on neurodegenerative diseases
- May protect against cancer
- Fights bacterial and fungal infections
- May help fight HIV virus

**15. Fennel (*Saunf*):**

Indian restaurants often use candied fennel seed as an after-dinner mint.

Health benefits of Fennel:

- Helps regulate blood pressure
- Reduces water retention
- Fennel tea for constipation, indigestion, and bloating
- Fennel seeds reduce asthma symptoms
- Helps purify blood
- Improves eyesight
- Great for Acne
- May prevent cancer

**16. Star Anise (*Chakra Phul*):**

Anise tastes like fennel, but sharper. Star anise is used in some preparations of Garam Masala. It is a delicious frying spice, and is the key seasoning of the incredible tamarind chutney that you will find in many Indian restaurants or as a side of dipping sauce when you buy samosas, and many other Indian foods.



The oil produced from star anise contains thymol, terpineol and anethole, which is used for treating cough and flu. Anise also helps improve digestion, alleviate cramps and reduce nausea. Consuming star anise tea after meals helps treat digestive ailments such as bloating, gas, indigestion and constipation.

Health benefits of Star Anise:

- Star Anise is prescribed as an excellent digestive aid
- With its anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and expectorant properties, it is widely used in treating coughs, particularly whooping cough, asthma and bronchitis
- Alleviates nausea

### 17. Carom (*Ajwain*):



The flavour is strong and startling when eaten raw. Though it looks like a seed, it is technically a dried fruit. Each tiny seed has a huge amount of thymol in it, and this gives it a flavour a bit like thyme, but several times stronger. Using carom in breads is common.

A small quantity of carom in a sauce adds huge character, particularly because the seeds tend to hold onto their very strong flavour. Typically 1/8th of a teaspoon is enough. Once it's fried in hot oil or butter, it emits a slightly smoky taste which adds an element of surprise in many Indian meals. It balances well with most common Indian spices, and is particularly good for adding dimension to a dal-fry or another dish with a lot of other assertive spice flavours like cardamom and cumin.

Health benefits of carom:

- Carom seeds have powerful antibacterial and anti-fungal properties
- Improves cholesterol levels
- May lower blood pressure
- Combats peptic ulcers and relieves indigestion
- May prevent coughing and improve airflow
- Has anti-inflammatory effects

**18. Nutmeg (*Jaiphal*):**

Whole, grated nutmeg is a common ingredient across India, particularly in the south. Using it as a whole spice is a completely different experience than using the ground spice, which rapidly loses the strong nutmeg flavour.

The advantage of a freshly grated or shaved nutmeg is that it still contains all those volatile oils and moisture that give it such a distinctive flavour. You can also leave the nutmeg whole or smash it into larger chunks, and use it in a seasoning step.

Health benefits of nutmeg:

- Contains powerful antioxidants
- Has anti-inflammatory properties
- Has antibacterial properties
- Controls blood sugar level
- Elevates mood

**19. Mace (Javitri):**

Mace is a webbing or leaf-like spice that wraps the nutmeg seed. Mace has an even more savoury, musky flavour than nutmeg, but they are similar enough that their flavours can easily be confused. Mace is often fried whole, and usually one blade or leaf of mace is enough to really impart a strong flavour. Used in recipe for cream of chicken turkey soup.

Health benefits of mace:

- Keeps digestive system healthy
- Improves appetite
- Boosts blood circulation
- Reduces stress
- Good for dental health
- Protects kidneys
- Cures cough and cold
- Anti-inflammatory properties

**20. Cloves (Lavang):**

They're strong. Add too much, and you will overpower other subtler flavours. Generally for a family-sized meal, we're using between five and ten whole cloves, depending on the dish. They are another very important biryani ingredient. You can find them along with cardamom in all Biryanis, and in many aromatic Indian curries.

Health benefits of cloves:

- Contain important nutrients - manganese, Vitamins C and K
- Antioxydant
- May help protect against cancer
- Antibacterial
- Improves liver health
- Regulates blood sugar
- May promote bone health
- Reduces stomach ulcers

**21. Mustard Seeds (Rai):**

Whether it's brown, yellow or black, Mustard seeds are an essential component in Indian cooking, imparting a nutty, sharp note to many curries, and like many of the whole spices we've mentioned, they are often favoured for cooking in oil at the beginning of preparing a recipe.

Health benefits of Mustard:

- Mustard seeds are also good for your bones as they are packed with a mineral called selenium, which makes your bones stronger
- They also help to strengthen your nails, hair, and teeth
- Mustard seeds contain antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties that help in relieving pain in the gums, bones, and teeth
- Antibacterial

## 22. Black Pepper (Kali Mirch):



This is known as the King of spices. You all know the flavour of black pepper. You are likely to taste the heat of black pepper first before any other hot ingredient, and it adds a powerful high flavour note that no other spice can duplicate. Pepper and turmeric combination helps enhance the effects of both the spices. The *kashayam* (a traditional Ayurvedic drink with spices) with turmeric and pepper powder in boiled milk is a great health drink, to be taken at bed time. This may be called ‘gold milk’ for its yellow colour on account of turmeric and presence of the king of spices, also known as ‘black gold’.

Health benefits of black pepper:

- High in antioxidants
- Has anti-inflammatory properties
- May benefit your brain
- May improve blood sugar control
- May lower cholesterol levels
- May have cancer-fighting properties
- A versatile spice

**23. Indian Red Chili (Lal Mirch):**

Indian red chili is a ground spice with a heat similar to cayenne pepper, though it may be hotter or milder depending on where the chillies come from and how they're grown. This is also a good ingredient to add slowly at the end, when you're adjusting the heat of your dish.

Salt and chilli powder are used in almost all curries in India to improve taste. An omelette tastes good just by adding only salt and chilli powder. Adding green chillies, onion and garlic may further enhance the taste of an omelette.

Health benefits of red chillies:

- Fights inflammation and pain
- Promotes digestive health
- Aids in weight loss
- Enhances cognitive function
- Helps the heart
- Relieves nasal congestion



**24. Curry leaves (Kadhi patta):**

This is the significant Indian spice. Curry leaves are one of the most enigmatic Indian spice. They are the leaves - while available as a dried herb – are best used fresh, in the first or second stage of cooking, fried up with onions and other spices, to impart a pungent, citrus-like aroma.

Health benefits of curry leaves:

- Have antioxidants
- Curry leaves can heal wounds and burns
- May help in losing weight
- May help in keeping diabetes in check
- Helps sharpen your memory
- Helps relieve morning sickness and nausea
- Good for the eyesight

*Note: Please visit some renowned websites / google for details of medicinal value of various spices.*

***Disclaimer: Please consult an Ayurvedic professional before consuming a spice for cure of any ailment.***

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Ayurvedic medicine has a rich history. Originally shared as an oral tradition, Ayurveda was recorded more than 5,000 years ago in Sanskrit, in the four sacred texts called vedas: the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Adharvana Veda.

It is believed that Ayurveda is a gift from the Gods to humanity through Dhanvantari, the physician of Gods.

The trinity of Ayurvedic science:

- Charaka, author of Charaka Samhita
- Susruta, author of Susruta Samhita
- Vagbhata, is one of the most influential classical writers of Ayurveda. His writings include Ashtanagasangraha and Ashtangahridayasamhita. Both works make frequent reference to the earlier classical works, the Charaka Samhita and the Susruta Samhita.

Vagbhata was a disciple of Charaka. According to Vagbhata 85% of diseases can be cured by his 500 sutras (principle).

*Note: Please visit some renowned websites / google for details of medicinal value of various spices.*

***Disclaimer: Please consult an Ayurvedic professional before consuming a spice for cure of any ailment.***

***However, spices may be used in our cooking, as practiced traditionally.***

- End of the Chapter : Spices of Life -

# FRUITS OF THE EARTH



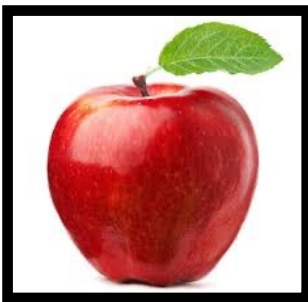
Image source: [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com)

# FRUITS OF THE EARTH

Note: Fruits should be taken on empty stomach. They are easily digestible and good for the stomach. As can be seen from the following details, most fruits are rich in vitamins, minerals and fibre; and have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. They provide immunity from various ailments such as Diabetes, Osteoporosis, Arthritis, Cardiovascular Diseases, Obesity, Respiratory problems, Asthma, Allergy, Alzheimer's, Depression and the like. In other words, they contribute to overall wellbeing of an individual. A must for your daily intake.

✔ **Health Benefits of various fruits are enumerated as follows:**

## ● APPLE



Apples are high in fibre and vitamin C, and they are also low in calories, have only a trace of sodium, and no fat or cholesterol. Apples are high in polyphenols, which function as antioxidants. An apple a day keeps the doctor away !

Health Benefits:

- Antioxidant properties
- Good for weight loss
- Good for the heart
- Lowers risk of diabetes
- Have prebiotic effects
- May prevent cancer
- Controls Asthma
- Good for bone health
- Protects the brain

## ● APRICOT (KHUBANI):



Good source for vitamin A and C and Rich in fibre.

Health Benefits:

- Good for the heart
- Rich Antioxidant
- Good for the blood
- Good for the skin
- Strengthens bones

## ● AVACADO (BUTTER FRUIT):

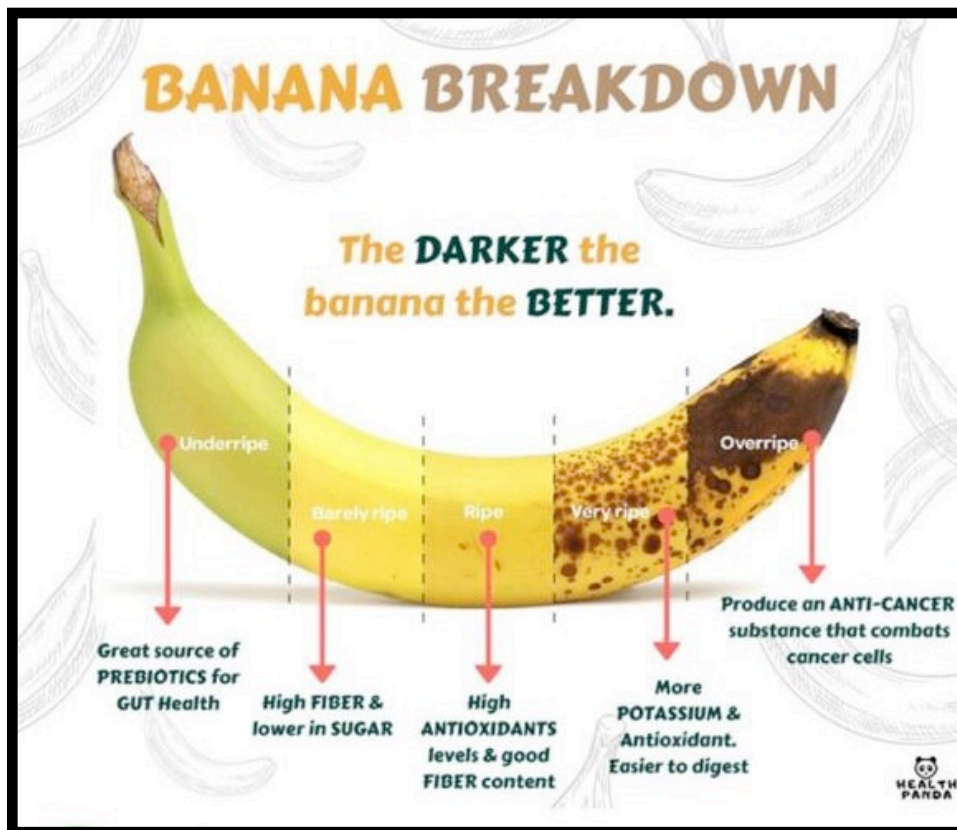


Avocados are a great source of **vitamins C, E, K, and B-6**, as well as **riboflavin**, niacin, **folate**, pantothenic acid, magnesium, and **potassium**. They also provide **lutein**, beta-carotene, and omega-3 fatty acids.

Health Benefits:

- Good for the heart
- Good for vision
- Prevents Osteoporosis
- May prevent cancer
- Good for healthy pregnancy; Results in healthy babies
- Lowers the risk of depression
- Good for digestion
- Improves immunity
- Natural detoxification
- Antimicrobial action

- BANANA (KELA):



Bananas contain a fair amount of fiber, as well as several antioxidants. Raw bananas (not including the peel) are 75% water, 23% carbohydrates, 1% protein, and contain negligible fat. A 100-gram reference serving supplies 89 Calories, 31% of the US recommended Daily Value (DV) of vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, and moderate amounts of vitamin C, manganese and dietary fiber, with no other micronutrients in significant content. *Bananas are beneficial at every stage from raw condition to full ripening, as can be seen from the above picture.*

#### Health Benefits:

- Bananas Contain Nutrients That Moderate Blood Sugar Levels
- Bananas may aid weight loss
- May improve digestive health
- Bananas may support heart health
- Bananas contain powerful antioxidants
- Bananas may help you feel more full
- Unripe bananas may improve insulin sensitivity
- Bananas may improve kidney health
- Bananas may have benefits for exercise (Reduces muscle cramps, Contains easily digested carbs)



## • BACK BERRIES:



Contain vitamin C, Nutrient dense with vitamins and minerals viz. manganese, copper.

Health Benefits:

- Like honey, black berries help regenerate skin
- Antioxidant
- Fibre rich
- Contains vitamin K, which prevent profuse bleeding when hurt
- Good for diabetes management
- Good for digestion
- Reduces risk of obesity

## ● BLUE BERRIES:



Blue berries contain a plant compound called anthocyanin which gives their blue colour and health benefits.

Health Benefits:

- Heart health
- Bone strength
- Skin health
- BP control
- Cancer prevention
- Mental health
- Diabetes management

## ● DATES (*Khajoor*):

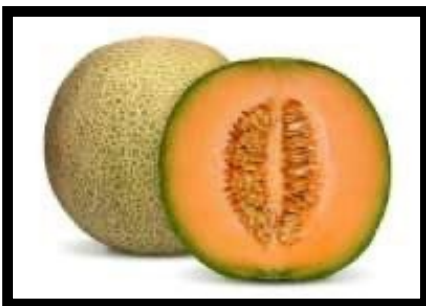


Very nutritious: Contains Fibre, Protein, Potassium, Magnesium, Copper, Manganese, Iron, and vitamin B6.

Health Benefits:

- Fibre rich
- Antioxidant
- Good for brain health
- Natural sweetener
- Promotes bone health
- Controls blood sugar

## ● CANTALOUPE (MUSK MELON):



Excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin A, potassium, Beta-carotene, and B vitamins. Beta-carotene, once eaten is converted to vitamin A or Antioxidants.

Health Benefits:

- Vitamin A is important for eye-health, healthy red blood cells
- Vitamin C is good for common cold
- Maintenance of blood vessels, cartilage, muscle and bones.
- May reduce the risk of cancer
- Prevents memory loss due to aging.
- Reduces risk of heart disease and diabetes
- Potassium is good for nerve health

## ● CAPE GOOSEBERRIES:

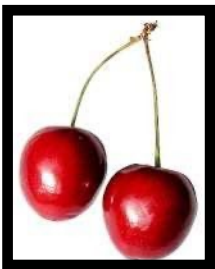


They are rich in vitamins, antioxidants and soluble fibre.

Health Benefits:

- High Fibre and low calories
- Antioxidant
- Controls blood sugar
- Good for health of brain
- May prevent cancer
- Good for the heart

## ● CHERRIES:



A good source of antioxidants and Anti-inflammatory compounds.

Health Benefits:

- Improves sleep
- Good for heart health
- Slows down aging
- Wards off chronic illnesses
- May prevent cancer
- Prevents Alzheimer's
- Reduces obesity
- Antioxidant
- Anti-inflammatory

## ● CUSTARD APPLES (*Seethaphal*):



Custard apples are packed with vitamin C, vitamin A, Magnesium and Fibre.

Health Benefits:

- High in antioxidants
- Benefits Eye-Health
- Controls BP
- Good for digestion
- May prevent cancer
- Fights inflammation
- Boosts immunity

## ● CRANBERRIES:

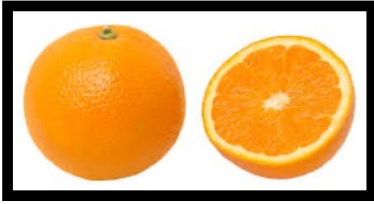


Higher on antioxidants, and lower in sugar than most other fruits. They are rich in iron, calcium, potassium, minerals, vitamin Bs, and vitamin C.

Health Benefits:

- Prevent urinary infection; good for kidney and bladder health
- Improves digestion
- Improves immunity
- Boosts immune system
- Prevents heart diseases
- Slows down aging process
- Antioxidant
- Reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease

## ● ORANGE (SANTRA):



They are rich in vitamins C and A, flavonoids, antioxidants, calcium, magnesium, potassium, dietary fibre.

Health benefits:

- Boosts immune system
- Slows down macular degeneration
- Anti-inflammatory
- Improves vision
- Promotes dental health
- Improves skin appearance
- May prevent cancer
- Protects the heart
- Improves digestion

## ● FIGS (ANJEER):



They contain Fibre, Vitamins : A,C,K; Minerals : Calcium, Magnesium, Phosphorus and Potassium.

Health Benefits:

- Prevention of constipation
- Diabetes control
- Control of BP
- May prevent cancer
- Good for healthy bones
- Helps in weight reduction
- Good for liver function

## ● GUAVA (JAMA):



Rich in vitamin C, antioxidants, potassium, and fibre.

Health Benefits:

- Lowers blood sugar level
- Good for heart health
- Reduces menstrual pains
- Improves digestion
- Helps weight loss
- Boosts immunity
- May prevent cancer
- Good for the skin

## ● INDIAN GOOSEBERRIES (AMLA):



100 grams of Indian strawberries contain as much vitamin C as a dozen oranges; has strong antioxidant properties.

- Health Benefits:
- Promotes hair health
- Aids diabetes treatment
- Lowers cholesterol
- Boosts immunity
- Aids digestion
- Prevents heart diseases
- Promotes eye-health



## ● GRAPES:

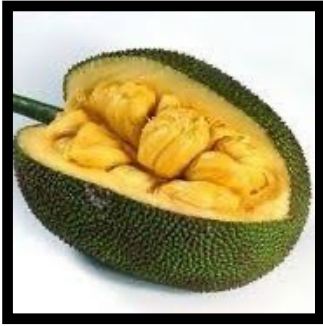


Packed with vitamins, esp. B6,C and K. Contain fibre, minerals : potassium, copper and magnesium. High on antioxidants.

Health Benefits:

- Prevents chronic diseases
- Beneficial for heart health
- Reduces BP and Cholesterol
- Reduces blood sugar level and protects from diabetes
- Good for eye health
- Improves memory
- Promotes bone health
- Slows down aging - promotes longevity
- Decreases inflammation
- Improves immunity: a beneficial effect of vitamin C.
- Protects from certain viruses

## ● JACK FRUIT:



Contains almost every vitamin and minerals you need besides plenty of fibre.

Health Benefits:

- Controls blood sugar level
- Controls BP
- Reduces cholesterol
- Prevents inflammation that may lead to chronic diseases
- Reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes

## ● INDIAN BLACK BERRIES (JAMUN), BLACK PLUM:

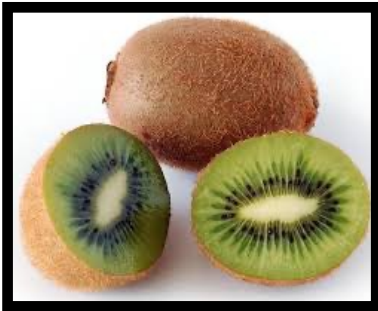


Contains vitamins C, B6, protein, fibre, minerals: calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, sodium, and phosphorus.

Health Benefits:

- Boosts immunity
- Good for diabetes
- Improves bone strength
- Prevents heart diseases
- Aids digestion
- May prevent cancer
- Rich in antioxidant
- Combats respiratory disorders
- Anti-histamine - fights allergic reactions
- Cures sore throat and severe cough

## ● KIWI FRUIT:

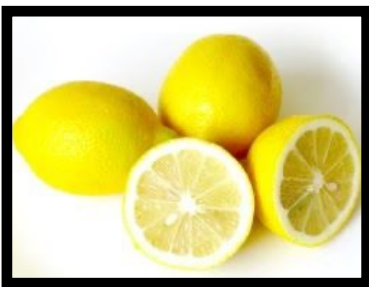


Contains vitamin C, vitamin K, vitamin E, folate, and potassium. A good source of antioxidants and fibre.

### Health Benefits:

- Can help treat Asthma
- Aids digestion
- Boosts immune system
- Controls BP
- Reduces blood clotting
- Protects from vision loss

## ● LEMON:

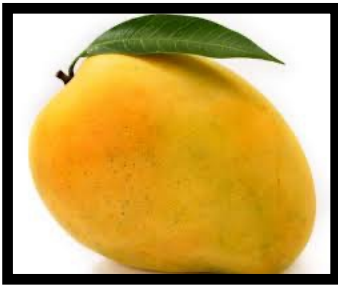


Lemon is a good source for vitamin C.

### Health Benefits:

- Promotes hydration
- Supports weight loss
- Improves skin quality
- Aids digestion
- Freshens breath
- Prevents kidney stones

## ● MANGO (Aam):



Mango is known as the King of fruits. The fruit packs a dozen types of polyphenols having antioxidant activity that shields cells from DNA damage and prevents degenerative diseases including type 2 diabetes and cancer. Contains vitamins A and C.

Health Benefits:

- Boosts immune system
- Improves health of skin and hair
- Eases constipation
- Regulates blood sugar
- Supports eye health: protects from ultraviolet rays and slows down progression of cataract

## ● PAPAYA:

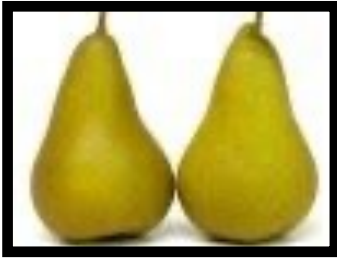


It is packed with antioxidants that can reduce inflammation and fight disease. Makes you look younger. contains vitamin A, C, B9 and potassium.

Health Benefits:

- Has powerful antioxidants
- Has anti-cancer properties
- Improves heart health
- Fights inflammation
- Improves digestion
- Protects skin health
- Reduces the risk of heart disease

## ● PEARS:



Pears are highly nutritious. Rich in folate, vitamin C, copper and potassium.

Health Benefits:

- Promote gut health
- Anti inflammatory
- May prevent cancer
- Lowers the risk of diabetes
- Improves heart health
- Help loose weight

## ● PINEAPPLE:



Pineapple is packed with nutrients - vitamins and minerals. Rich in vitamin C and manganese.

Health Benefits:

- Contains antioxidants that fight against diseases
- Its enzymes ease digestion
- Reduces risk of cancer
- Boosts immunity
- Surpasses inflammation
- Reduces symptoms of arthritis
- Speedy recovery after surgery or strenuous exercises.

## ● PLUMS:



They contain many nutrients including several vitamins and minerals besides fibre and antioxidants.

Health Benefits:

- Relieves constipation
- Antioxidants
- Lowers blood sugar level
- Promotes bone health
- Good for heart health

## ● PEACHES:



Peaches are high on fibre, vitamins and minerals. Contain antioxidants.

Health Benefits:

- Good for digestion
- Boosts immune system
- Good for skin health
- Protects eyes from macular degeneration and cataract
- Lowers cancer risk
- Promotes brain health
- Controls BP



## ● PROMOGRANATE (ANAR):



They are rich in fibre, vitamins C,K; minerals and bioactive compounds.

Health Benefits:

- Anti inflammatory
- Fights prostate cancer
- Lowers BP
- Fights arthritis and reduces joint pain
- Lowers the risk of heart disease
- Fights bacterial and fungal infections
- Improves memory

## ● STRAWBERRIES:



Rich in vitamin C, fibre, and potassium.

Health Benefits:

- May prevent cancer
- Help reduce weight
- Boosts immunity
- Keeps the brain sharp
- Helps reduce bloating

## ● SAPOTA / SAPODLLA (CHIKOO):

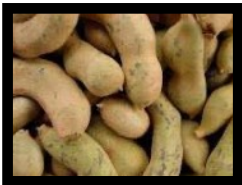


They are rich in vitamin C, potassium and natural fructose content.

Health Benefits:

- Provides a lot of energy
- Ant-inflammatory
- Helps digestion
- Antioxidant
- Good for bones
- Controls BP
- Controls weight
- May prevent cancer
- Nourishes skin
- Anti-aging
- Treats dandruff

## ● TAMARIND:



Packed with nutrients. Contains vitamins E,C,B and multiple minerals: calcium, potassium.

Health Benefits:

- For healthy heart
- Managing diabetes
- Boosts immunity
- Weight reduction
- Antihistaminic: Fights cold and flu
- Prevents Asthma
- Helps digestion
- Ant-aging

## ● RED RIPE TOMATOES:



### Health Benefits:

- Good source of vitamins C, A, K and potassium
- Good for heart health
- Controls BP
- Improves vision
- Improves digestion
- Helps with diabetes management
- Good for skin health
- Good for bone health

## ● WATER MELON:



### Health Benefits:

- Good source of vitamins A and C
- Improves heart health
- Antioxidant
- Lowers inflammation
- Prevents muscular degeneration
- Good for skin and hair
- Improves digestion
- Prevents cancer
- Improves hydration

***Disclaimer: Please consult a nutrition professional for your specific needs.***

*Note: Please visit renowned websites / google for details of nutrition value of various fruits.*

- End of the Chapter : Fruits of the Earth

# VEGAN VEGETABLES



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# VEGAN VEGETABLES



## Introduction:

Vegetables are parts of plants that are consumed by humans or other animals as food. The original meaning is still commonly used and is applied to plants collectively to refer to all edible plant matter, including the flowers, fruits, stems, leaves, roots, and seeds. Originally, vegetables were collected from the wild by hunter-gatherers and entered cultivation in several parts of the world, probably during the period 10,000 BC to 7,000 BC, when a new agricultural way of life developed.

At first, plants which grew locally would have been cultivated, but as time went by, trade brought exotic crops from elsewhere to add to domestic types. Nowadays, most vegetables are grown all over the world as climate permits, and crops may be cultivated in protected environments in less suitable locations. The scale of production varies from subsistence farmers supplying the needs of their family for food, to agribusinesses with vast acreages of single-product crops. Depending on the type of vegetable concerned, harvesting the crop is followed by grading, storing, processing, and marketing.

Vegetables can be eaten either raw or cooked and play an important role in human nutrition, being mostly low in fat and carbohydrates, but high in vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber. Many nutritionists encourage people to consume plenty of fruit and vegetables for good health.

Many vegetables have antioxidant properties. Antioxidants are compounds that inhibit oxidation. Oxidation is a chemical process that can produce free radicals, thereby leading to chain reactions that may damage the cells of organisms. Free radicals are unstable molecules with unpaired electrons resulting from cellular metabolism which can steal electrons from lipids, proteins, DNA causing them damage. Free radicals may cause heart diseases, cancer and many other diseases. Antioxidant Vegetables defends the cells by detoxifying free radicals .

Nutrition benefits of various vegetables are enumerated in the following pages.



## **Nutrition Facts and Health Benefits:**



### ● Asparagus:

- Asparagus is rich in folate, also known as vitamin B-9. Folate is an essential nutrient, and it is especially important at times of rapid growth, such as during gestation, infancy, and adolescence
- Rich in vitamins - A, E, K
- Antioxidant
- Good source of fibre-Improves digestive health
- Reduces risk of heart disease, diabetes
- Lowers blood pressure
- Helps weight loss



### ● Green Beans:

- Excellent source of Vitamins and minerals
- Rich source of Fibre
- Contains Vitamin A, B1 and B6
- Good source of iron, calcium, manganese and potassium



### ● Beets:

- Lowers blood pressure
- Boosts energy
- Improves brain power
- Prevents constipation
- Antioxidant



● **Broccoli:**

- Good for weight loss
- Good for diabetes management
- Good for heart health
- antioxidant
- Source of vitamins A, B,C and K
- Sources of minerals Manganese and potassium
- Contains fibre



● **Cabbage, Green:**

- Good source of fibre
- Contains potassium
- Good source B-vitamin
- Prevents cancer, boosts Immunity, cures constipation, aids weight loss, prevents stomach ulcers, reduces risk of Alzheimer's, reduces risk of cataract, anti-inflammatory



● **Carrot:**

- The soluble fibre in carrots has been shown to help regulate blood sugar and insulin levels, and support digestive health
- Improves vision
- Carrots are a particularly good source of fibre, vitamin K1, potassium, and antioxidants
- Weight loss friendly
- Lowers Cholesterol





● **Cauliflower:**

- Good source of fibre
- They help protect cells from damage and have anti-inflammatory, antiviral, and antibacterial effects.
- Good for thyroid issues
- Keeps you hydrated
- May prevent cancer



● **Corn:**

- Feeds healthy bacteria in the digestive track
- Rich in vitamin C
- Antioxidant
- Protects cells from damage
- Wards off cancer , heart disease
- Contains vitamin B-complex group
- Contains potassium , Controls BP, muscle contractions
- Contains manganese



● **Cucumber:**

- Rich in Vitamins C,K
- Rich in minerals - magnesium, manganese, potassium
- Antioxidant
- Promotes hydration
- Aids weight loss - Low in calories
- Lowers blood sugar
- Regular bowel movement



● **Eggplant:**

- Rich in vitamins - Folate, vitamin K and C
- Rich in minerals - Manganese, potassium
- Antioxidant
- Reduces risk of heart disease
- Promotes blood sugar control
- Helps weight loss
- Cancer fighting benefits



● **Mushrooms:**

- Mushrooms are a good source of vitamins including folate, vitamins C, B and D
- Mushrooms are a good source of minerals including potassium, phosphorus and magnesium
- Antioxidant
- Anti-cancer properties
- Weight management
- Reduces risk of Alzheimer's - Improves cognitive health
- Improves oral health
- Prebiotic source



● **Okra:**

- Rich in nutrients - folate, vitamins A,C,K,B6 and manganese
- Antioxidant
- Good for heart health
- Anti-cancer properties
- Lowers blood sugar



● **Onions :**

- Packed with vitamins - vitamins C, B, B9, B6
- Rich in mineral potassium
- Good for cellular function, fluid balance, nerve transmission, kidney function and muscle contraction
- Benefits heart health, Controls BP
- Controls cholesterol, blood clots
- Antioxidant



• **Red Pepper:**

- Rich in vitamins - vitamin C, B6, K1, Folate
- Contains potassium
- Good for heart health
- Good for eye health
- Anemia prevention
- Antioxidant



● **Green Pepper:**

- Antioxidant
- good for eye health, muscle health
- Reduces risk of heart disease, Prevents blood clots
- Good source of vitamins A and C
- Reduces risk of heart disease and cancer
- Alleviates symptoms of arthritis and asthma



● **Green peas:**

- Anti-inflammatory effect
- Good source of fibre
- Decreases cravings and hunger - Supports weight loss
- Excellent source of proteins
- Promotes digestion
- Reduces cardiac risk
- Good for eye health
- May prevent cancer
- Controls osteoporosis
- Supports healthy pregnancy
- Contains vitamins A,C and E & zinc
- Boosts immunity



● **Potato:**

- Good source of vitamins - Folate, Vitamins C, B6
- Good source of Minerals - potassium, manganese , magnesium
- Antioxidant
- Controls blood sugar
- Improves digestive health
- Resistant starch in potatoes is a source of nutrition for beneficial gut bacteria
- Reduces inflammation in the colon, improves colon defences and a lowers the risk of colorectal cancer
- Contains fibre in the skin, which make up 1-2 % of the potato; Dried skins are about 50% fibre.



● **Pumpkin:**

- Rich in vitamins - A, C, B2, E
- Rich in minerals - potassium, copper, manganese
- High antioxidant - reduces risk of chronic diseases
- Boosts immunity
- Good for eye sight
- Promotes weight loss - Low calorie count
- Reduces risk of cancer
- May benefit heart health
- Good for skin



● **Spinach:**

- Rich in vitamins - vitamin A, C, K1, folic acid
- Rich in minerals - iron and calcium
- High on insoluble fibre
- It adds bulk to stools as food passes through the digestive system and prevents constipation
- Antioxidant
- Promotes heart health
- Improves eye health



● **Sweet Potato:**

- Good source of vitamins - A, C and B6
- Rich in minerals - manganese, potassium, copper
- Good source of fibre
- Promotes gut health
- Good for vision
- Enhances brain function



● **Tomato:**

- Good source of fibre
- Good sources of vitamins - C, K1, B9
- Contains plant compounds
- Good for heart health
- Cancer prevention
- Good for skin health
- Antioxidant



● **Zucchini:**

- Rich in vitamins - folate, A, B6, C and K
- Rich in minerals- potassium, magnesium, copper and phosphorus
- Good for healthy heart, vision, healthy prostate, thyroid function
- Promotes digestion, Aids weight loss
- Controls blood sugar

*Note: Please visit some renowned websites / google for details of nutritional value of various vegetables..*

***Disclaimer: Please consult a nutrition specialist for your specific needs.***

# YOGASANA



Image source: pixabay.com

YOGASANA



## \* Introduction:

**Yoga** is a group of physical, mental and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India. Yoga is a Hindu philosophical tradition. There is a broad variety of yoga schools and practices in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The term "Yoga" in the Western world often denotes a modern form of exercise, consisting largely of the postures or asanas. But it is much more than that; it is a mental and spiritual practice apart from being a physical.

The practice of yoga dates back to pre-vedic traditions; possibly in the Indus Valley Civilisation around 3000 BCE. Yoga is mentioned in the Rigveda and also referenced in the Upanishads. The chronology of earliest texts describing yoga-practices is unclear, varyingly credited to the Upanishads. The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali were compiled sometime between 500 BCE and 400 BCE, and gained prominence in the 20th century after being first introduced by Swami Vivekananda.

Yoga gurus from India later introduced yoga to the West, following the success of Swami Vivekananda in the late 19th and early 20th century with his adaptation of yoga tradition. Outside India, it has developed into a posture-based physical fitness, stress relief and relaxation technique. Yoga in Indian traditions, however, is more than physical exercise; it has a meditative and spiritual core.

### - **Etymology and Origin of Yoga:**

The Sanskrit noun *yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root *Yug* "to attach, join, harness, yoke". Yoga is also mentioned in Bhagavad Gita: 2000BCE.

[Chapter Six of Bhagavadgita - Dhyana Yoga : An excerpt is reproduced in the chapter epilogue for your ready reference]. In the context of yoga sutras, the word Yoga means Union.

### - **Precautions:**

- Wear comfortable clothing.
- Do not unduly strain your body / limbs / muscles while practicing asanas; you should be always comfortable. Avoid strenuous asanas, if your body is not flexible enough. Duration of each asana in general : Each asana may be repeated 2-3 times, breathing normally 5 times in each position. If any part of the body is strained, stop yogasana till recovery.

Benefits of various Yogasanas are enumerated in the following pages.

***Disclaimer: Please consult a yoga professional and your doctor before practicing yogasana, considering the age and state of your body.***

## ● Veerasana (Warrior Pose) :



Raise both the hands straight up with palms in touch (or clasp hands as if you are wielding a weapon such as a sword or an axe, like a warrior) move one leg forward, bend backwards while bending the knee of the front leg and simultaneously stretching the rear leg straight as in the picture. Repeat the asana with the other leg in front. Duration: Breath normally 5 times in the posture; repeat the cycle 2-3 times, before moving on to the next pose.

### Benefits:

- This asana improves the strength and blood supply to the joints like the ankles, knees, hips, lumber region, cervical region and shoulders.
- Abdominal muscles are stretched so helps to remove fat from the region.
- Helps to maintain the proper balance of the body. Improves the flexibility of the spinal column.
- Puts pressure on the digestive organs and increases their efficiency and function.
- Strengthens the legs / calf muscles / thighs.
- Puts pressure on the nervous system and improves coordination of the nervous system with the musculoskeletal system. Improves balance.
- Relieves tension in the neck and shoulders. Expands the chest. Reduces fat around the pelvic region.

## ● Bhujangasana (Snake Pose) :

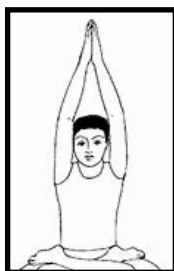


Lie on a yoga mat with stomach down and slowly rise your head as a snake with support of hands with palms on the floor.

### Benefits:

- Good for chronic back pain and spondylosis.
- Yoga Guru, Iyengar claimed that this pose is a "panacea for an injured spine" and would undo "slight displacement of spinal discs".

## ● Parvathasana (Mountain Pose) :

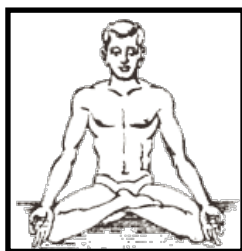


Stretching the arm, back and abdominal muscles improves the functioning of these parts of the body. This helps cure certain problems of spinal cord. In this asana body is stretched.

### **Benefits:**

- Improves body posture.
- Calms the mind.
- Strengthens lower body.
- Develops balance and coordination.

## ● Padmasana (Lotus Pose)



As the backbone is kept erect in this asana, its functioning is vastly improved. Dhyana Mudra further helps in stabilising pulse beats. Consequently strain on muscles is reduced, which in turn reduces strain on heart. Also breathing slows down, collective effect of all this is one can achieve concentration of mind.

### **Benefits:**

- It opens up the hips, stretches the ankles and knees, and keeps joints and ligaments flexible.
- It calms the brain and increases awareness and concentration.
- It keeps the spine straight and helps develop a good posture.
- It eases menstrual discomfort.
- It stimulates the spine, pelvis, abdomen, and bladder.
- It relaxes the body and restores energy levels.
- It stimulates the abdomen, spine, and bladder.
- It reduces unwanted fat from the hips and the thighs.
- It increases blood circulation.
- It is an excellent remedy for sciatica.
- It prevents abdominal diseases and reproductive disorders in women

## • Dhanurasan (Bow Pose) :

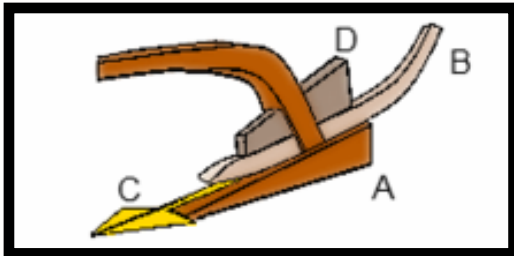


This asana is a combination of both Bhujangasana and Shalabhasana and can deliver benefits of both the asanas. Mainly the weight is taken by the abdomen. Your body needs to be flexible for this asana. Do it slowly and cautiously without any jerky motion.

### **Benefits:**

- This has a favourable effect on enzyme-producing organs, liver, pancreas, small intestine and big intestine. As a result of this the concerned organs become more active and efficient.
- Blood circulation in arms and legs is improved.
- Strengthens thigh muscles.
- Good for backache.

## ● Halasana (Plough Pose) :



Exhale and inhaling, start raising both the legs upward and stop when they make an angle of 90 degrees with the floor. Exhaling raise the waist, hips and push the legs backward over the head. Try to maintain the balance. After exhaling completely, push the legs further back and try to touch the ground with toes. Keep the toes stretched. Continue normal breathing.

**Warning:** Do not perform this strenuous asana if your body is not flexible enough.

### **Benefits:**

- All the muscles from toes to waist are also stretched helping improvement in the functioning of veins.
- This asana is also useful for gastric troubles, digestion problems.
- Strengthens thigh muscles and calf muscles.

## ● Makarasana (Crocodile Pose) :

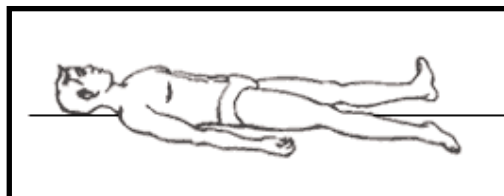


In the prone position place your both hands crossed around head or rest your forehead on it, relax all the muscles, continue normal breathing. Bring the arms forward and fold them. Then place the forehead on the folded elbows and relax the neck. Spread the legs and keep them foot apart, with the heels inside and the toes outside. Then relax the legs. Keep the whole body relaxed. Try to touch as many parts of the body to the floor as possible. Keep the breathing normal and the head in a position which is comfortable. Do until you are completely relaxed.

### **Benefits:**

- As all the muscles are relaxed, they need less blood and oxygen supply. Consequently, the heart beats and the breathing also slow down. Now as the whole basic operation turns slow, the body gets good rest.
- This asana being for relaxation, the muscles of the body should not be strained. Attempt should be made to relax all muscles and the joints of the body.

## ● Shavasana (Corpse Pose) :



Spread both the legs and keep them at a distance of 1 or 1.5 feet apart. Keep the heels facing inside and allow the toes to fall outside and relax them.

Take both the hands little away, by about 12 inches, from the body and relax them. Keep the palms facing the roof and the fingers half - closed.

Turn the neck to any side and relax it. Further, relax the muscles of the face. Keep the eyes closed with ease and without pressure. Continue with extremely slow and deep breathing.

The very aim of this asana is to relax each and every muscle in the body. In order to reach or attain this aim it becomes necessary to take the position in which one finds all the organs of the body in a comfortable and soothing state. Do until you feel totally relaxed.

### **Benefits:**

- Body movements are minimised, blood circulation is also minimised, heart rate drops, respiration drops, mind becomes calm and relaxed.
- This helps improve the functioning of brain, it can cure heart related ailments, it also brings down blood pressure.
- Helps to relax when you are tired or stressed out.

## ● Vajrasana (Yoga Pose) :

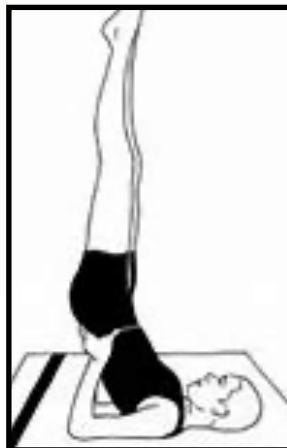


Fold the left leg in the knee and place the toe on the floor. Fold the right leg in the knee and place the toe on the floor and join the two toes. Sit on the pit formed by the parted heels. Place the palms on the knees. It is important to keep the spine, the neck and the head, upright in one straight line in this Asana. Keep the sight fixed at the level of the height. Don't have any pressure on the hands. Continue smooth breathing, when the final position is attained.

### **Benefits:**

- Helping keep the mind calm and stable.
- Curing digestive acidity and gas formation.
- Helping to relieve knee pain.
- Strengthening thigh muscles.
- Helping to relieve back pain.
- Helping in treatment of urinary problems.
- Increasing blood circulation to the lower abdominal region.
- Helping to reduce obesity.
- Helping reduce menstrual cramps.

## ● Viparithakarani (Legs Up Pose) :



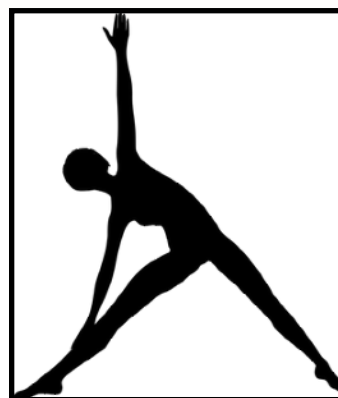
Exhale and inhaling start raising both the legs upward and stop when they make angle of 90 degree with the floor. Exhaling raise the waist and push the legs backward over the head.

Inhaling support the waist with both the hands, straighten the legs and stretch the toes towards sky. Keep the sight on the toes. Continue normal breathing. In this asana the arms up to the elbows are placed on the floor. The body from neck to the elbows is kept straight. The toes are stretched upward. Initially if it is difficult to maintain this asana keeping the legs straight then bend the legs slightly while keeping the balance. Most of the times we remain either in standing or sitting position. Quite an opposite position is taken in this asana.

**Benefits:**

- This helps improve the blood circulation as impure blood easily reaches the heart.
- To some extent you can get the benefits of Shirsasana (Full up side down) in this posture.
- Brain gets good supply of blood.

● **Trikonasana (Triangle Pose) :**



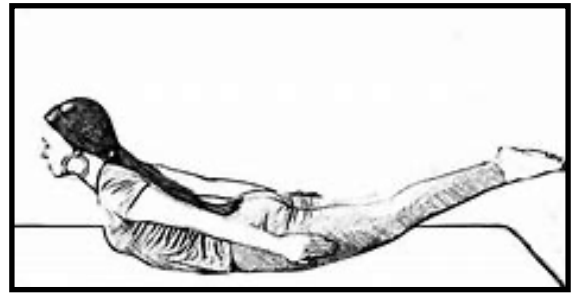
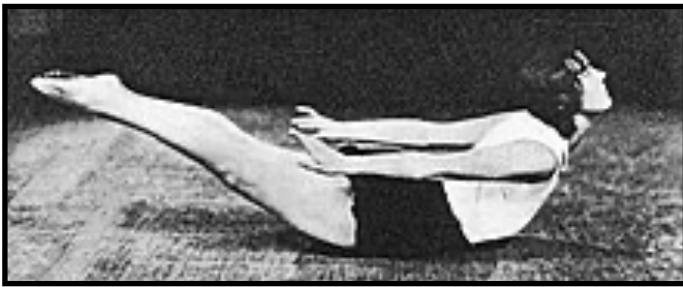
Lift the left leg and place it at a maximum distance towards the left. Turn the toe of the left foot towards the left and inhale. Exhale and bend the left leg in the knee and place the left hand palm near the left foot toe. Take the right hand forward straight above the right ear and continue smooth breathing. It is necessary to keep the right hand, mid body and right leg in one straight line in this asana. The neck and the waist should be kept straight. The arms of the right hand should be kept touching the right ear. At this stage, the left leg is kept bent at 90 degree angle, the left arm is kept straight & its palms placed on the floor. In this position the weight of the whole body comes on the left hand.

**Benefits:**

- In this asana the weight of the body comes chiefly on the calves of the bent legs and on the muscles of the hand resting on the floor and has beneficial effect on them.
- The stretching of the body has good effect on the muscles of those parts and improves their functioning.
- This asana is useful for the joints of the waist.



## ● Shalabhasana (Locust Pose) :



Exhale and inhaling, raise both the legs from the waist keeping them straight in the knees. Keep the toes stretched to the backside and continue normal breathing. Take the precaution that the legs are straight in knees as otherwise the strain on desired organs is reduced. During the practice chin should rest on ground. Keeping the raised legs straight in the knees, stretch the toes towards the backside. At this point the legs may tremble, but this trembling can be stopped if the raised legs are slightly lowered. Attempt should be made to raise the legs as much as possible without having any tremble and then stabilise them at that point and keep the breathing normal.

### **Benefits:**

- This asana mainly centres the lower vertebra of the spinal cord and the muscles of the abdomen and thighs.
- The strain activates their blood circulation. As a result of this the concerned organs become more active and efficient.
- This strain is effective on small and big intestine and certain enzyme producing glands.

## ● Sarvangasana (All Limbs Pose) :



Exhale and inhaling start raising both the legs upward and stop when they make angle of 90 degree with the floor. Exhaling raise the waist and push the legs backward over the head.

Support the waist with both the hands, using your hands get the legs, waist and back in one straight line and stabilise them in this position, stretch the toes towards sky. Keep the sight on the toes.

Continue normal breathing. One should concentrate on getting the legs, waist and the back in one straight line and this line making 90 degrees with ground. In this asana the arms up to the elbows are placed on the floor. The body from feet to the shoulders is in straight line, only the chin is placed in the Jugular notch forming a tie which is called 'Jalandhar Bandha'. Because of this 'Bandha' jaws can't be opened. Most of the times we remain either in standing or sitting position. Quite opposite position is taken in this asana.

#### **Benefits:**

- This helps improve the blood circulation as impure blood easily reaches the heart.
- The 'Jalandhar Bandha' (Throat Lock) pressurises the thyroid glands and to some extent pituitary gland thus helps improve their function.
- To some extent you can get the benefits of Shirsasana (up side down) in this posture.
- This asana controls and cures constipation.
- It also helps cure varicose veins and haemorrhoids.

#### ● Ustrasana (Camel Pose) :



Ustrasana is a deep backward bend from a kneeling position; the completed pose has the hands on the heels. The backs of the feet may be flat on the floor, or the toes may be tucked under for a slightly less strong backbend.

#### **Benefits:**

- Yoga Guru, Iyengar claimed that this pose would benefit "drooping shoulders and hunched backs". He claimed that the "whole spine is stretched and toned".
- It increases your lung capacity thus making your breathing well.
- It brings flexibility in abdomen, neck and chest region.
- It cures infection related to trachea and larynx.
- It regenerates your kidneys and improves its functioning.
- It massages your abdominal organs and cures the problems related to it.
- It provides you a sense of balance and improves your flexibility.

## ● Matsyasana (Fish Pose) :

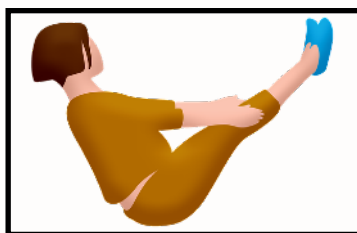


The asana is a backbend, where the practitioner lies on his or her back and lifts the heart by rising up on the elbows and drawing the shoulders back. The neck is lengthened, and the crown of the head is "pointed" toward the 'wall' behind the practitioner. As the arch of the back deepens with practice, and the heart and throat open further, the top of the head may brush the ground, but no weight should rest upon it.

### Benefits:

- The stretched upper body allows unrestricted airflow, thus providing extra oxygen into the lungs.
- It expands the bronchial tubes to permit easier breathing.
- Stretching of the neck and spine stabilises the functions of the parathyroid, pineal, pituitary.
- It improves metabolism.

## ● Navasana (Boat Pose) :



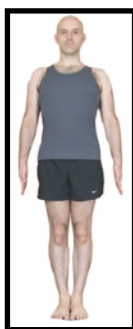
The body comes into a V-shape, balancing entirely on the buttocks. In different variations and traditions, the arms, legs and torso may take different positions. In Paripurna Navasana, the legs and back are lifted high and arms extend forward and parallel to the ground. In Ardha Navasana, hands interlace behind the neck and both back and shoulders are closer to the ground.

To come into the pose, begin seated on the floor. Bend your knees, bringing the soles of the feet to the ground, and bring the palms to the back of the thighs. Begin to lean back as you shift your weight from your feet, eventually lifting the soles of the feet off the ground. Balance on the sitting bones, not leaning right back on to the tailbone. Lengthen the spine to broaden and lift the chest.

### Benefits:

- Abdominal muscles: Navasana gives suitable stretch to the abdominal muscles thus toned the abdominal body part. Reduces tummy.
- Makes the lower back stronger.
- It makes the nerves and entire nervous system stronger by making appropriate stretch to the entire body.

## ● Tadasana (Mountain Pose) :

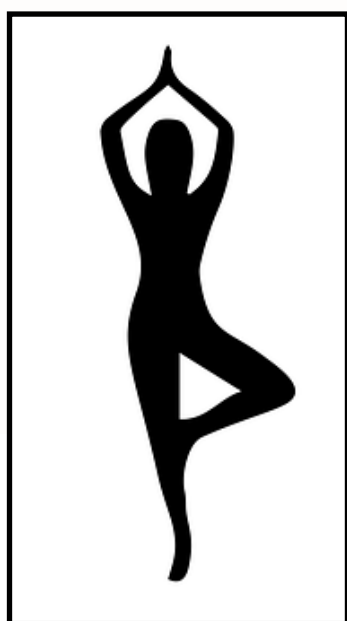


It is a basic standing asana in most forms of yoga with feet together and hands at the sides of the body. There is some contention between different styles of yoga regarding the details of the asana which results in some variations. The posture is entered by standing with the feet together, grounding evenly through the feet and lifting up through the crown of the head. The thighs are lifted, the waist is lifted, and the spine is elongated. Breathing is relaxed. Although Tadasana is a basic asana, it is the basis for many standing asanas.

### **Benefits:**

- Due to deep breathing , it provides strength and expansion to the lungs .
- This is the best exercise to increase the height.
- Develops and activates the nerves of the entire body.
- It gives strength to vertebral column and heart.
- Also Good for regulating the menstrual cycle in women.
- Cures the problems related to indigestion.

## ● Vrikshasana (Tree Pose) :

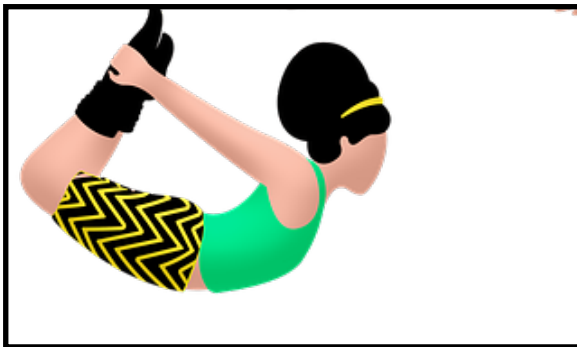


From Tadasana, weight is shifted to one leg, for example, starting with the left leg. The entire sole of the foot remains in contact with the floor. The right knee is bent and the right foot placed on the left inner thigh, or in half lotus position. In either foot placement, the hips should be open, with the bent knee pointing towards the side. With the toes of the right foot pointing directly down, the left foot, centre of the pelvis, shoulders and head are all vertically aligned. Hands are typically held above the head either pointed directly upwards and unclasped, or clasped together in anjali mudra. The asana is typically held for about 10 seconds, returning to Tadasana while exhaling, then repeating standing on the opposite leg.

#### Benefits:

- Tree pose improves neuromuscular coordination.
- Benefits for Women. Helps relieve premenstrual symptoms like leg cramps and abdominal cramps.
- Relieves stress and anxiety as concentration is needed for balancing the body on one leg in Tree Pose.

#### ● Bhekasana (Frog Pose) :



The pose is entered from a prone position. The arms reach back, the knees are bent and the hands catch the feet, pressing them down. The arms are reversed so that the elbows point upwards and the fingertips downwards. The head and chest are lifted, and the gaze is directed upwards. In the completed pose, the feet reach the floor. Your body needs to be flexible for this asana. Do it slowly and cautiously with out any jerky motion.

#### Benefits:

- Good for the back, spine and spondylitis.
- Improves functioning of adrenal glands and pancreas.
- Massages lower abdomen - improves digestive system.
- Chest opener - improves breathing.
- Improves muscle strength of arms, shoulders and the chest.
- Improves flexibility of the entire body

## ● Anjaneyasana (Anjaneya / Hanuman Pose) :

The pose is entered from a lunge, with the back knee lowered to the ground, the back arched and the

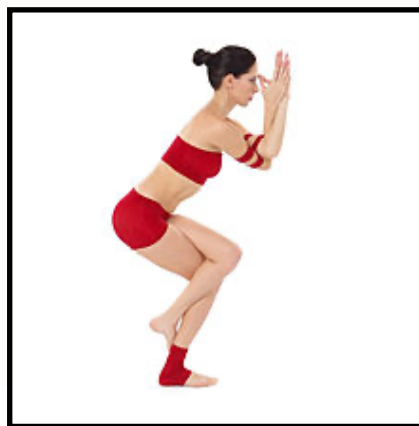


arms raised and stretched over the head. The toes of the back foot remain tucked forward, the heel lifted. The front foot remains in standing position, the hips lowered close to the front foot and the front knee fully bent and pointing forwards. In the full pose, the rear foot is lifted and grasped with both hands, the elbows pointing up.

### **Benefits:**

- A deep stretch to the spine improves the flexibility.
- Stimulates the internal organs at the abdomen.
- Builds better energy within the body.

## ● Garudasana (Eagle Pose) :



Garudasana is an asymmetric position in which one leg, say the right, is crossed over the left, while the arm on the opposite side, say the left, is crossed over the right, and the palms are pressed together. Like all poses on one leg, it demands, and may help to build, balance and concentration. According to Satyananda Saraswati, the two palms pressed together resemble the eagle's beak. The gaze is directed at a fixed point in front

**Benefits:**

- Improves concentration.
- Enhances Flexibility – The twisting hand and legs in this asana simultaneously stretch many parts including shoulder, upper back, hamstring, calves, hip flexors, adductors, etc. Therefore, makes one spongy enough to twist & turn like this asana.
- Strengthens and loosens joint – Twisting aids in loosening and pressure while maintaining the posture strengthens bones due to ossification (bone tissue formation). Hence, strengthens and loosens the joints of arm, shoulder, and leg.
- Reduces Stress and Anxiety – The intense twisting in this asana improves the blood circulation to the areas; normally remaining out of reach. It also frees up the tightness from the body that produces a soothing effect over the mind. Hence, relieve stress and anxiety.
- Helps in Sciatica – It stretches the lower back and the almost all the leg muscles through which sciatica nerve crosses, and overcome muscle stiffness due to which Sciatica nerve causes pain.

## ● Matsyendrasana (Lord of the fishes Pose) :



One foot is placed flat on the floor outside the opposite leg and torso twists toward the top leg. The bottom leg may be bent with the foot outside the opposite hip or extended with toes vertically. The arms help leverage the torso into the twist and may be bound in a number of configurations by clutching either feet or opposite hands.

**Benefits:**

- Increases the elasticity of the spine, tones the spinal nerves and improves the functioning of the spinal cord.
- Stretches the muscles on one side of the body whilst compressing the muscles on the other side.
- Relieves back pain and stiffness from between the vertebrae
- Massages the abdominal organs.



## ● Bhujapidasana (Shoulder Pressure Pose) :



Bhujapidasana is an arm supported asana in which the base of support are the palms of the hands. It requires both balance and strength to maintain.

### **Benefits:**

- Improves shoulder strength.
- Improves balance.

## ●Tulasana (Balance Pose) :



From Padmasana (lotus position), the practitioner with the palms placed on the floor either side of the hips raises the entire torso and crossed legs using the arms and shoulders.

### **Benefits:**

- Tulasana strengthens your arms, wrists and upper body region.
- Makes your shoulders strong.
- It relaxes the muscles and calms the mind.
- Improves balance.
- Includes tightening of the abs and subsequently, brings about a rigid stomach.
- The muscles of your midriff (abdomen) are pulled up tight and thus, your lungs show signs of improvement.

## ●Dandasa (Staff pose) :

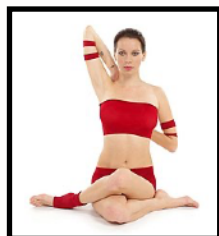


The asana is entered from a seated position with the legs extended forward. The palms or the fingertips (if the palms don't reach) should be rested on the ground either side of the body. The upper-body should be extending upward through the crown of the head, and the back should be completely perpendicular to the ground (as though sitting against a wall). If this is not possible, a block may be placed underneath the sitting bones. The legs should be squeezing together, and the toes should be pointing inwards toward the body. It may even be possible to create space between the heels and the ground by activating the leg muscles.

### Benefits:

- Strengthens back muscles.
- Helps to stretch the chest and shoulders.
- Improves posture.
- Strengthens abdomen.
- Cures sciatica and asthma.

## ●Gomukhasana (Cow face Pose) :



The pose is entered from kneeling by crossing the legs; the heel of the upper leg is tucked in under the lower thigh near the buttock. The arm on the lower leg side is raised, the forearm bent down, while the other arm reaches down behind the back, the forearm bent up, so the hands can clasp between the shoulder blades. The sitting position can be modified either by putting a folded blanket on the heels, and if need be also one beneath them. The pose stretches the shoulders. The hand position can be modified using a strap to extend the reach for those who cannot bring the hands together behind the back.

### Benefits:

- This asana helps to flex the back, making it more elastic.
- It helps to cure stiff shoulders and also helps in releasing the cervical spine.
- Practicing the Gomukhasana also aids in the treatment of sciatica.
- It enhances the working of the kidneys, thereby helping those suffering from diabetes.

## ●Upavistakonasana (Wide angle seated pose) :



The pose may be entered from dandasana (staff pose) by moving the legs apart as far as possible. The big toes may then be grasped with the hands, or with a belt around each foot. The back is lightly arched by raising the coccyx, and the body is inclined forwards. In the completed pose, the body leans forwards until the chin and nose touch the ground. People who cannot sit on the floor in dandasana can sit on a folded blanket for the pose.

A variation is to lean forward and to place the hands, palms up, on the ground in front of the body.

### **Benefits:**

- Regular practice of this posture gives a great pull to the lower parts of the waist and thus strengthens it.
- It strengthens your legs, shoulders muscles, elbows.
- Its practice enhances appetite by igniting gastric.
- Massaging the abdominal organs strengthens digestibility.
- By removing unnecessary fat, it is helpful to lose weight.

## • Utkatasana (Chair Pose) :



In Utkatasana, the knees are hips-width apart, the knees are bent, the hips are back, the chest is forward, and the arms are above the head, in line with the ears.

### **Benefits:**

- Thighs and calf muscles are strengthened in this pose.
- Good for the knee joints.

## ● Utthita Padangusthasana (Standing-Big Toe hold) :

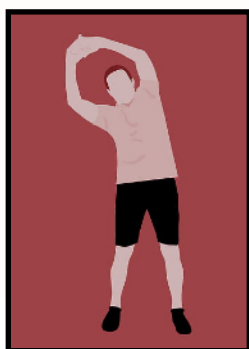


Utthita Padangusthasana is a pose with the body standing straight, on one leg; the other leg is stretched out straight, and the foot of the raised leg is grasped by the hand on the same side of the body. It is entered from the standing pose Tadasana. The pose has two forms: 1- with the raised leg to the front, and the opposite hand to the hip; 2- with the raised leg to the side, and the opposite hand stretched out straight to the other side. Students can practise the pose using a strap to hold the extended foot, or a ledge or wall for support; or may keep the knee bent.

Benefits;

- It stretches but also strengthens the knees, ankles, and the legs.
- The groins, chest, spine, waist, lungs, and shoulders get a good stretch.
- The abdominal organs are stimulated.
- Stamina is increased.

## ● Ardha Chandrasana (Half Moon Pose) :



The pose is entered from Trikonasana (triangle pose), stretching up with the rear leg and out with the front hand so that only the fingertips remain on the ground. The gaze is directed at the upper hand. However, Iyengar describes the pose with the upper hand resting on the hip.

Benefits of Ardha Chandrasana:

- The pose helps to strengthen the ankles.
- Improves balance.

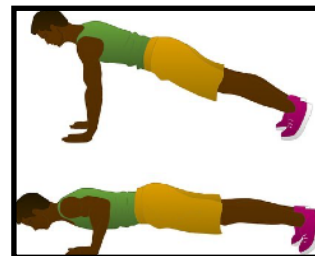
## ● Balasana (Child Pose) :



From a kneeling position, bring the forehead to the floor and relax the arms alongside the body, palms upwards.

- It stretches the back and the spine and also the inner part of the groin, inner thighs, and the hamstrings.
- It is a great hip opener. It uses the arms' strength instead of gravity to work on the hips, thus strengthening the arms and biceps as well.
- This happy baby yoga pose works towards releasing all the tension trapped in the lower back.

## ● Chaturanga Dandasana (Four Limbed Staff Pose) :



In Chaturanga Dandasana the hands and feet are on the floor, supporting the body, which is parallel to and lowered toward, but not touching, the floor. It looks much like a push up, but with the hands quite low (just above the pelvis), and the elbows kept in along the sides of the body.

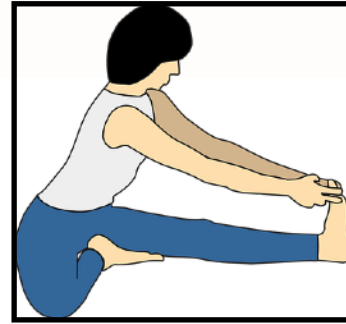
When performed correctly, it can help prepare the body for arm balance asanas by strengthening important muscles and promoting good form.

In Chaturanga Dandasana is part of the Surya Namaskar (Salute to the Sun) asana sequence, performed on an exhale. In yoga practice, the posture is simply held for a period of about 30 seconds with continuous breathing.

Benefits of Chaturanga Dandasana:

- Strengthens arms, shoulders and leg muscles.
- Develops Stability.
- Strengthens back.

## ● Janu Sirsasana (Head to Knee Pose) :



In a seated position, one leg is extended with toes pointing upward, and the other leg is bent with knee pointing away from the straight leg and the sole of the foot in by the groin. The torso turns and folds over the extended leg.

Benefits of Janu Sirsasana:

- Improves strength and flexibility.
- It involves stretching of the neck, shoulders, spine, hamstrings, abdominal muscles, and groins.
- Improves digestion.
- Maintains hormone balance.
- Better respiration.

*Note: Please visit some renowned websites / google for details reg. procedure / benefits / precautions pertaining to any yogasana.*

***Disclaimer: Consult a yoga professional and a doctor before you practice Yogasanas considering the age and state of your body.***

- End of the Chapter : Yogasana -

# PRANAYAMA



Image source: [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com)



# PRANAYAMA

## ● Introduction:

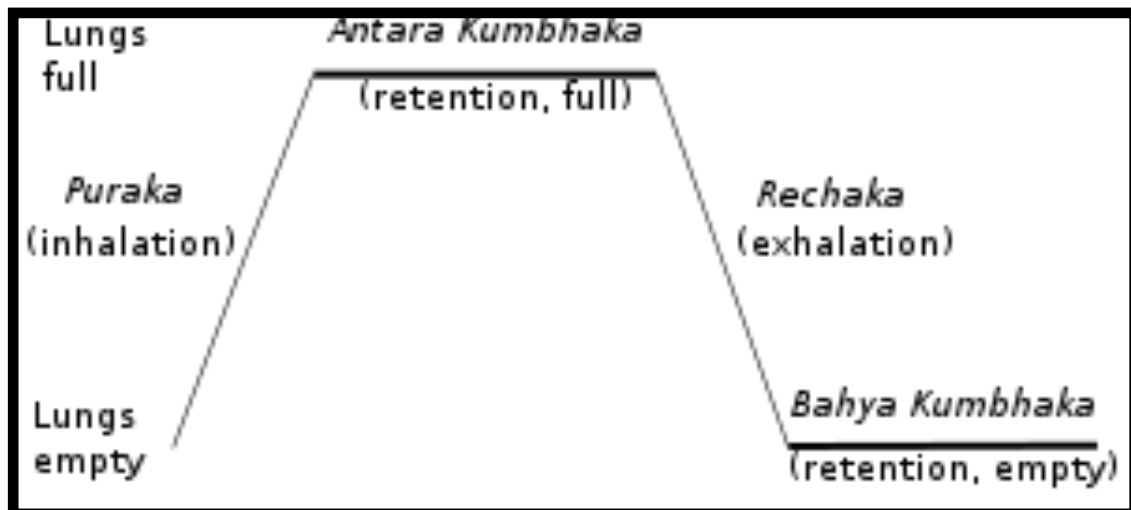
*Pranayama* is the practice of breath control in yoga. According to sage Patanjali it provides a vital bridge between the body and the mind. Patanjali is known as the father of yoga. He codified all aspects of yoga in to a certain format known as “Yoga Sutras” which is a collection of 196 sutras in verses.

Etymology and origin of Yoga / Pranayama:

This practice was first mentioned in the oldest sacred text known as Rigveda and later in Upanishads. It is also mentioned in Bhagavadgita (Chapter six : Dhyana yoga).

*Pranayama* is the practice of breath regulation. It is a main component of yoga, an exercise for physical and mental wellness. In Sanskrit, **Prana** means life energy and **yama** means control. The practice of pranayama involves breathing exercises and patterns. You control timing, duration, and frequency, and sequence of every breath and hold.

Here is a graphical representation of basic *pranayama* exercise, involving the breathing - inhaling, retention and exhaling - pattern. We shall elaborate on various patterns of pranayama alter in this chapter.




*Kumbhaka* is the retention of the breath in the practice of *pranayama*. It has two types, one after inhalation and another after exhalation; a complete suspension of the breath for about 4 sec.

The goal of *pranayama* is to connect your body and mind. It supplies your body adequate oxygen while removing toxins. This provides healing physiological benefits.



## ● Pranayama Techniques:

1. Nadishuddhi Pranayama (Alternate nostril breathing)
2. Ujjayi Pranayama (Victorious breathing)
3. Bhramari Pranayama (Honeybee humming breath)
4. Kapalbhati - Bastrika Pranayama (Bellow breath) with a variation viz.
5. Sunaka Pranayama ( A variation to Kapalbhati )
6. Om  Pranayama

## ● Benefits of Pranayama :

- Decreases Stress.
- Improves Sleep Quality.
- Lowers Blood Pressure.
- Improves Lung Function.
- Helps prevention of respiratory disorders.
- Helps speedy recovery from Asthma, Allergic Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Tuberculosis.
- Improves Brain Function and Memory.
- Helps relaxation/
- Results in overall wellbeing.

● **Preparation to practice pranayama ; Asanas and Mudras:**

While practicing these types one should first sit in one of the following Asanas: Padmasana, Vajrasana or Swastikasana.



^Padmasana^



^Swastikasana^

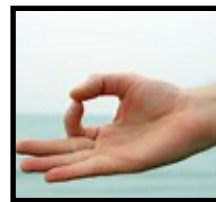


^Vajrasana^

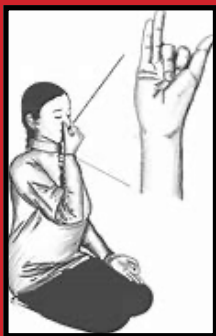
Then, the left hand should be kept in Dhyana Mudra and the right hand in Pranava Mudra. The eyes should be closed and the whole attention should be concentrated on breathing.

- \* Pranava Mudra / Nasika Mudra / Vishnu Mudra for right hand and \*\*Gyan Mudra for left hand in case of Nadishuddhi Pranayama:

Pranava Mudra\* >



< Gyan Mudra\*\*



Use of Pranava Mudra for closing nostrils.

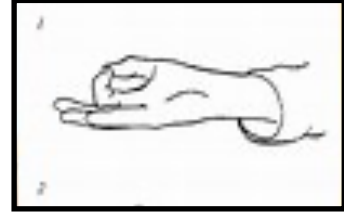
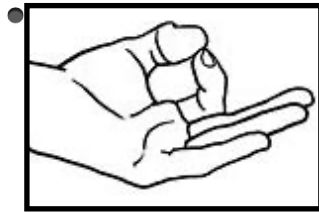
Use Thumb to close right nostril and last two fingers to close left nostril.

How to form Pranava Mudra for Pranayama:

The first two fingers of the right hand palm are to be curved and last two fingers are to be kept straight and to be held together. Now straighten the thumb and bending the right hand in the elbow, place the curved fingers in such a way that they come near the lips. Keep the hand from shoulder to elbow glued to the chest. Keep the right hand thumb on the right side of the nose and last two fingers on the left side of the nose. Now by pressing the thumb, the nasal cavity on the right side can be closed and by pressing the last two fingers left side cavity can be closed. The pressure should be light and on just below the nasal bone, where the fleshy part begins. With this arrangement of the fingers, one can close any of the two nasal cavities. Here only the movement of thumb and the last two fingers is expected.

Used in Nadisuddhi Pranayama (Alternate nostril breathing)

- **Dhyan / Gyan / Chin Mudra**



- **Tribandha in Pranayama (3 Locks in Pranayama)**

The concept of *Tribandha* is essential for effective pranayama.

It is necessary to practice the three *bandhas* viz. *Jalandhar Bandha*, *Uddiyan Bandh* and *Mula Bandha* while studying Pranayama. When the Pranayama is to be practiced for increased duration and efficacy, the use of these three *bandhas* is necessary. While fixing Jalandhar Bandh, we fold the neck a little bit forward. The pressure of the neck is felt on the breath pipe, hence the bandh is not observed while inhaling or exhaling, but after inhaling i.e after Pooraka and it should be released before exhaling i.e after Rechaka. That means the bandh is fixed while being in Kumbhaka. After Pooraka (inhalation), while being in Kumbhaka, when this bandh is performed, it is used for stopping the inhaled air from going out. The bandh also exerts pressure on Carotid- sinus and also tries to reduce the blood pressure. If internal Kumbhaka is observed without this Jalandhar Bandh, there is a fear of increasing the blood pressure. This risk is eliminated by performing this bandh. However, the bandh should be released before performing Rechaka (exhalation).

When Jalandhar Bandh is fixed while in Kumbhaka after performing Pooraka, the pressure of the air in the lungs is increased to considerable extent. This pressure is further increased by performing Uddiyan Bandh. The Uddiyan Bandh also regulates the pressure in an appropriate direction. Both the bandhas must be released while performing Rechaka after Kumbhaka. However, Mula Bandh may be continuously performed during the practice of Pranayama, if one can. Mula Bandh must be performed during Kumbhaka at least, so that the generated air pressure is kept under proper control.

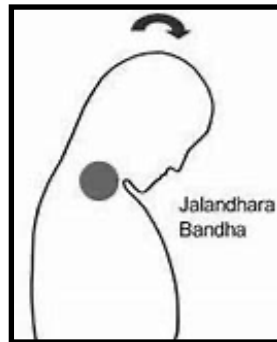
In short, it means that after Pooraka (inhalation), the *bandhas* should be fixed in the order as Jalandhar Bandh, Uddian Bandh and then Mula Bandh; and they should be released in the reverse order i.e Mula Bandh, Uddian Bandh and then Jalandhar Bandh before performing Rechaka (exhalation).

The *bandhas* are mechanisms by which a yogi can direct the flow of prana, the universal life-force energy that animates and unites us all.

**The three *bandhas* are explained in the following pages.**

1. Jalandhar Bandha (Throat Lock):
2. Uddiyan Bandha (Abdominal Lock):
3. Mula Bandha (Root Lock - Anal muscle contraction) :

- **Jalandhar Bandha (Throat Lock):**



This bandha is performed by extending the neck and elevating the sternum (breastbone) before dropping the head so that the chin may rest on the chest. Meanwhile, the tongue pushes up against the palate in the mouth. The result is a throat lock and holding the breath in the lungs for better absorption. It is some what like closing a valve and arresting the air in the lungs; air can neither enter or exit during kumbhaka while performing Jalandhar bandha.

- **Physical Effects:**

Due to the particular action of the neck required to achieve this bandh, it is pressed forward and the spinal cord gets a little bit lifted upwards. The force of this action is felt on the spinal cord. Spinal cord has the utmost importance in the control of the body. With this force, the circulation of blood increases thereby increasing the efficiency of the spinal cord.

- **Uddiyan Bandha (Abdominal Lock):**



Uddiyan Bandha, also called abdominal lock or upward lifting lock, is the abdominal bandha described and employed in pranayama. It involves, after having exhaled all the air out, pulling the abdomen under the rib cage by taking a false inhale while holding the breath and then releasing the abdomen after a pause. The process is repeated many times before letting the air into the lungs, resuming normal breath.

- **Physical Effects :**

The diaphragm is moved to a great extent in this bandh, hence the muscles of the diaphragm get well exercised and this movement also helps in the regular breathing. When the strength and the efficiency of diaphragm is improved, the breathing system also works more efficiently. Also, it is discovered after research that the organs in the stomach develop a negative pressure in this Uddiyan bandh. Due to such negative pressure, the blood supply to these organs is improved. The difference between the negative pressure during this bandh and the normal pressures resumed after relaxation, increases friction on the internal organs such as stomach, small intestines, liver etc. thereby improving their efficiency. This also results in improving the secretion of the digestive juices. The bandh involves movement, as if one is inhaling, however actual air is not inhaled, hence this creates negative pressure on the lungs and the heart. This also results in improving their efficiency. Due to this negative pressure, the blood circulation in the heart is increased. The bandh also helps in improving the digestive system. It may also be affecting several other organs of the body. It is stated in various ancient texts that apart from these benefits, the bandh is also useful for spiritual progress and awakening of Kundalini power. The bandh is indispensable for the study of pranayama. The air pressure resulting in pranayama is regulated in proper direction due to the position of this bandh.

- **Mula Bandha (Root Lock - Anal muscle contraction) :**



The name Moola Bandha is derived from Sanskrit where “Mula” means “Root”, “Bandha” means “Lock” and “Asana” means “Pose” or “Posture.” The English name of Moola Bandha is Root Lock. Moola Bandha or Root Lock is also called “The Perineal Contraction Pose”. It results in contraction of anal muscle. When you practice Moola Bandha or Root Lock, the focus should be more towards the energy, awareness, and stretch rather than doing the physical exercise mechanically.

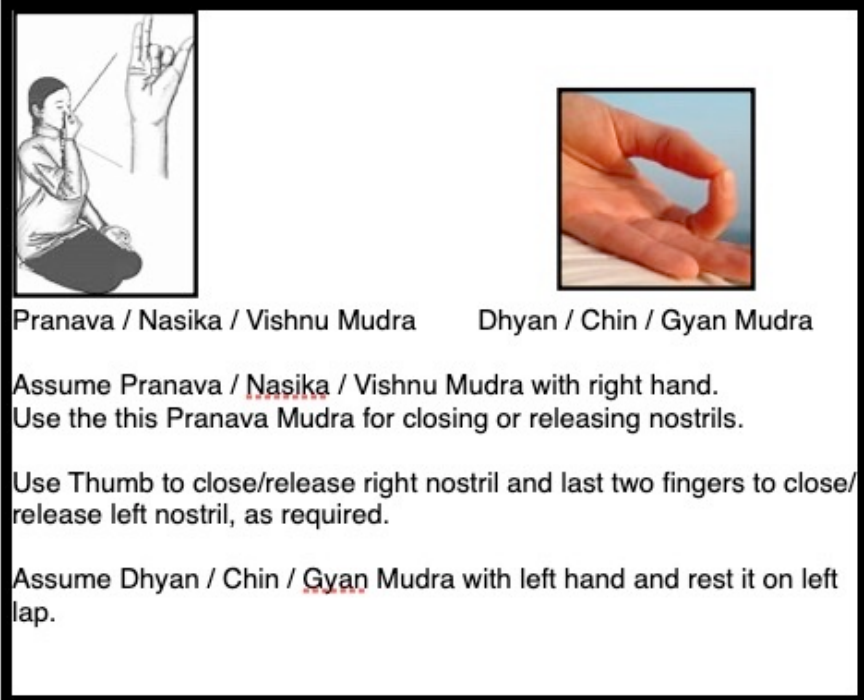
The Moola Bandha is the highest of all the Bandha and is very useful for our body. The Mula Bandha or Root Lock can be done in any position, such as sitting, lying or standing.

- **Physical Effects:**

The muscles which are not generally used, are contracted in this bandh. This results in more blood supply to these muscles thereby improving their efficiency. This is the obvious benefit of this bandh. Also, the muscles surrounding Muladhar Chakra are contracted and the pressure of such contraction is definitely felt on the Muladhar Chakra. Kundalini power, which is supposed to be residing at the chakra, is awakened due to the practice of this bandh. However, it cannot be

definitely stated as to the duration for which the bandh is to be practised for such awakening of the Kundalini power. The beneficial effect of this bandh is also felt on the nerves attached to the muscles involved in the bandh. It is stated that the bandh is to be practised while doing Pranayama. While performing pranayama, the blood is accumulated around the waist. Practice of this bandh results in circulation of this accumulated blood. Nadishuddhi Pranayama (Alternate nostril breathing)

● **Nadishuddhi Pranayama (Alternate Nostril Breathing) :**

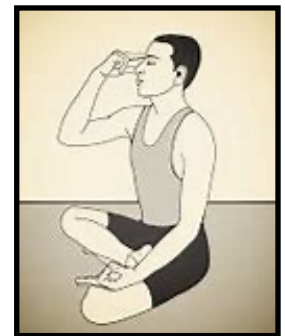


Pranava / Nasika / Vishnu Mudra      Dhyana / Chin / Gyan Mudra

Assume Pranava / Nasika / Vishnu Mudra with right hand.  
Use the this Pranava Mudra for closing or releasing nostrils.


Use Thumb to close/release right nostril and last two fingers to close/release left nostril, as required.


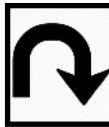
Assume Dhyana / Chin / Gyan Mudra with left hand and rest it on left lap.



● **Mudras to be assumed for Nadishuddhi Pranayama:**

- **Pranav / Nasika / Vishnu Mudra (For Right Hand) >** 

- **Dhyana / Gyan / Chin Mudra (For Left Hand) >** 

- **Alternate semi circular nostril breathing flow >**  

Right to Left                      Left to Right

- **What is Nadi Shuddhi?**

Nadi Shuddhi refers to the cleansing of subtle channels through which vital life-force energy (prana) travels in the body. The term is derived from two Sanskrit roots, nadi meaning "flow," or "channel" and shuddhi meaning "cleansing" or "purifying." The cleansing can be performed via a pranayama breathing technique known as nadi shodhana or alternate nostril breathing.

Whilst nadi shuddhi refers to cleansing in itself, nadi shodhana is the name of the practice through which the cleansing occurs. The two terms are often used interchangeably to refer to the pranayama practice, in which alternate nostrils are closed off on both the inhale and exhale, allowing the breath to travel through one side of the nose at a time.

- **How to perform Nadishuddhi Pranayama?**

1. To perform nadi shuddhi via alternate nostril breathing, it is important to sit in a stable posture such as padmasana (Lotus Pose) or sukhasana (Easy Pose) in which the spine can remain upright, thereby allowing prana to flow through the ida, pingala and sushumna nadis. The left hand can rest in Dhyan mudra / chin mudra on the left lap, whilst the right hand performs Pranava / Nasika / vishnu mudra in front of the face.
2. Beginning with an inhalation through the left nostril, the thumb is used to gently close the right nostril. The thumb is then released and the ring finger used to close the left nostril, allowing the exhale to release through the right side. Similarly, breathe in from right nostril and exhale through the left nostril.
3. This semi-circular motion of breath - 'left to right' & 'right to left' - completes one cycle of nadi shodhana. Then repeat the cycle.
4. For maximum cleansing benefit, this pranayama should be practiced for at least ten minutes.
5. Timings: Inhalation = 4 seconds, Holding breath after inhalation = 4 seconds, Exhalation = 6 seconds, and Holding breath after exhalation = 4 seconds.

Tribandha may be applied during Nadishuddhi pranayama ie. inhale (puraka) for 4 seconds, hold breath after inhalation (Kumbhaka with applying jalandhar bandha / throat lock) for 4 seconds, exhale (rechaka while applying "uddiyan bandha / abdominal lock" and "mula bandha / root lock") for 6 seconds and then hold breath after exhalation (kumbhaka while continuing with tribandha) for 4 seconds - as in Ujjain pranayama described next. Release bandhas in reverse order and relax and then start next cycle of Nadishuddhi Pranayama.

Note 2: Without holding breath the same process is known as "Anulom - Vilom" pranayama.

- **Benefits of Nadishuddhi Pranayama:**

- Cleansing the nadis.
- Balances the right and left sides of the brain.
- Strengthens the lung function and cardiovascular system.
- Improves blood circulation, thereby improving the function of the rest of the body's organs.
- Increases energy.
- Calms the nervous system, reducing stress and anxiety.
- Boosts the immune system.
- Stills the mind.



## ● Ujjai Pranayama (Victorious breathing) :



Ujjayi Pranayama is a part of the Ashtanga and Vinyasa yoga practices used by the ancient yogis of India. This pranayama derives its name from the Sanskrit word “Ujjayi,” which means to be victorious. The pranayama is also sometimes referred to as ocean breath or hissing breath. This particular pranayama aims to keep the mind cool and the body warm. The practice of Ujjayi pranayama involves deep inhalation from both nostrils with a half closed glottis.

When done properly, Ujjayi (translated as "victorious") breathing should be both energising and relaxing. In the Yoga Sutra, Patanjali suggests that the breath should be both dirga (long) and sukshma (smooth). The sound of Ujjayi is created by gently constricting the opening of the throat to create some resistance to the passage of air. Gently pulling the breath in on inhalation and gently pushing the breath out on exhalation against this resistance creates a well-modulated and soothing sound - something like the sound of ocean waves rolling in and out.

It is important to remember that the key to Ujjayi breathing is relaxation; the action of Ujjayi naturally lengthens the breath. To practice the inhalation, focus on creating a soothing and pleasing sound that is unhurried and unforced. Work on your Ujjayi breathing in a seated, relaxed cross-legged position. Imagine sipping the breath in through a straw. If the suction is too strong the straw collapses and great force is required to suck anything through it. Once Ujjayi breathing is mastered in a seated position, the challenge is to maintain the same quality of breathing throughout your asana practice.

### - Benefits of Ujjayi Pranayama

- Ujjayi pranayama helps the practitioner to practice superior level of concentration and focus in our daily life. It diminishes distraction and helps the practitioner to become more self-aware of his surroundings so that he does not commit any grave mistakes.
- Practicing this pranayama on a daily basis helps to increase the blood circulation throughout the body and stimulates the overall body metabolism.
- By practicing this pranayama regularly, you can bring about bring positive changes to your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.
- Ujjayi Pranayama helps the body to get rid of toxins that have accumulated over a period of time.
- Practicing Ujjayi Pranayama helps to release tension. Additionally it also helps to diminish headaches and provide relief from sinus.



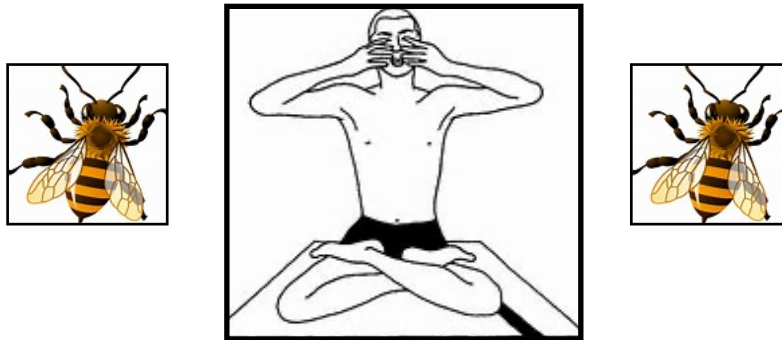
- **How to Perform Ujjayi Pranayama?**

1. Be seated in a comfortable position such as Padmasana, Swastikasana or Vajrasana . Relax and be comfortable.
2. Assume Dhyana Mudra / Gyan Mudra / Chin Mudra in both hands and rest them on your laps.
3. Gently close your eyes and relax your mouth and jawline.
4. Practice deep sessions on inhalations and exhalations. Feel the air passing through your wind pipe as you practise the process.
5. To begin with, take slow and deep breath (inhale) lasting about 4 seconds and then assume Jalandhar Bandha (Throat Lock) and hold the breath for about 4 seconds.
6. Then slowly exhale for about 6 seconds while simultaneously assuming Uddiyan Bandha (Abdominal Lock - Pull in your abdomen), with out releasing Jalandhar Bandha.
7. At the end, assume Mula Bandha for about 4 seconds, with out releasing Jalandhar Bandha or Uddiyan Bandha.
8. Then slowly release the Bandhas in reverse order ie. release Mula Bandha first, Uddiyan Bandha next and Jalandhar Bandha last.
9. This constitutes one cycle of Ujjai Pranayama.
10. Keep your mouth closed all the time; Breath only through the nose.
11. Concentrate on the sound of your breath, which should be audible by now. The inhalations should be able to fill your lungs to the fullest.
12. You can start this pranayama for 5 minutes in the beginning and increase the time period up to 20 minutes once you become familiar with the set up.

- **Precautions:**

- If you are a patient of hypertension refrain from practicing this pranayama excessively.
- If you feel a little warmth in the back of your throat, do not worry. It is normal.
- If you feel dizzy, discontinue the process and start breathing normally.
- Make sure under any circumstances the proportion of the breathing is not forced.

## ● Bhramari Pranayama (Honeybee humming breath) :



The Bhramari pranayama breathing technique derives its name from the Indian bee called *Bhramari*. Bhramari pranayama is effective in instantly calming down the mind. It is one of the best breathing exercises to free the mind of agitation, frustration or anxiety and get rid of anger to a great extent. A simple technique, it can be practiced anywhere - at work or home and is an instant option to de-stress yourself. The exhalation in this pranayama resembles the typical humming sound of a bee, which explains why it is named so.

It works on calming the nerves and soothes them especially around the brain and forehead. The humming sound vibrations have a natural calming effect.

### ● How to do Bhramari pranayama (Honeybee Breath) :

1. Sit up straight in a quiet, well-ventilated corner with your eyes closed. Keep a gentle smile on your face.
2. Keep your eyes closed for some time. Observe the sensations in the body and the quietness within.
3. \* Place your index fingers on your ears. There is a cartilage between your cheek and ear. Place your index fingers on the cartilage.
4. Take a deep breath in and as you breathe out, gently press the cartilage. You can keep the cartilage pressed or press it in and out with your fingers while making a loud humming sound like a bee.
5. You can also make a low-pitched sound but it is a good idea to make a high-pitched one for better results.
6. Breathe in again and continue the same pattern about 5 times.

Note: \* Alternatively use your thumbs instead of index fingers to press the cartilage between cheek and the ear and use the other 4 fingers to close the eyes.

### - Benefits of Bhramari pranayama (Honeybee Breath)

- Gives instant relief from tension, anger and anxiety. It is a very effective breathing technique for people suffering from hypertension as it calms down the agitated mind.
- Gives relief if you're feeling hot or have a slight headache.
- Helps mitigate migraines.


- Pranayama benefits in Improving concentration and memory.
- Builds confidence.
- Pranayama benefits in reducing blood pressure.
- Helps calm the mind in preparation for meditation.

### Precautions for doing Bhramari pranayama

- Ensure that you are not putting your finger inside the ear but on the cartilage.
- Don't press the cartilage too hard. Gently press and release with the finger.
- While making the humming sound, keep your mouth closed.
- Do not put pressure on your face.
- Do not exceed the recommended repetitions of 5 times.

### ●Om Pranayama:

- How to do  Om Pranayama:

1. Sit erect in Padmasana.
2. Take a deep breath for 4 seconds for plenty oxygen intake.
3. Hold breath for 4 seconds for good absorption of oxygen.
4. Chant Om  for 4 seconds during which exhalation takes place.
5. Blow out residual air in the lungs softly as in blowing out a candle gently.
6. Repeat 9 times or more.

- **Benefits of  Om Pranayama:**

- Improves concentration
- Reduces stress
- Gives strength to spinal chord
- Detoxifies the body
- Improves digestion
- Improves the function of the heart
- Ensures sound sleep
- Results in emotional stability
- Improves vocal chords
- Results in booming voice

- **Kapalbhati - Bastrika Pranayama (Bellow breath)**



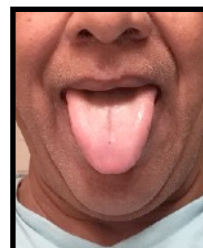
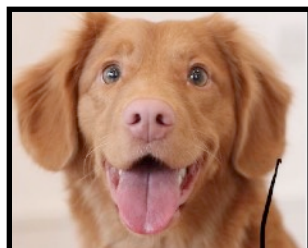
When you do pranayama, the toxins in our body are released through the outgoing breath. Regular practice of Kapal Bhati Pranayama detoxifies all the systems in our body. And the obvious sign of a healthy body is a shining forehead. Kapal Bhati literally translates to ‘the shining forehead,’ and this is precisely what happens with regular practice of this pranayama ; a forehead that glows not just from outside, but also an intellect that becomes sharp and refined.

- **How to do Kapal Bhati Pranayama**

1. Sit comfortably with your spine erect in Padmasana / Swastikasana / Vajrasana. Place your hands on the knees with palms open to the sky.
2. Take a deep breath in.
3. As you exhale forcefully, your stomach / abdomen is automatically pulled in and your navel moves back towards the spine. Do as much as you comfortably can. You may keep your right hand on the stomach to feel the abdominal muscles contract.
4. As you relax the navel and abdomen, the breath flows into your lungs automatically.
5. Take 60-90 such breaths to complete one round of Kapal Bhati Pranayama in about one minute.
6. After completing the round, relax with your eyes closed and observe the sensations in your body.
7. Rest for about a minute between rounds.
8. Do one more rounds of Kapal Bhati Pranayama.

- ***Sunaka Pranayama - Variation to Kapalbhati:***

***Sunaka Pranayama is a Variation to Kapalbhati (Bellow Breath) : Here you have to stick out the tongue and curve it down and then do exactly same as kapalbhati except that you breath in and out through the mouth instead of through the nose. Sunaka means Dog. Sunaka Pranayama is similar to the way a sunaka (dog) breathes some time and hence the name.***



- **Tips for practicing Kapal Bhati Pranayama**

- The exhalation in the Skull Shining Breathing technique is active and forceful. So, just throw out your breath.
- Don't worry about the inhalation. The moment you relax your abdominal muscles, inhalation will happen naturally.
- Keep your awareness on breathing out.
- Practice this technique at home on an empty stomach.
- Practice a maximum of 2 rounds.

- **Benefits of Kapal Bhati Pranayama**

- Increases the metabolic rate and aids in weight loss
- Clears the nadis (subtle energy channels)
- Stimulates abdominal organs and thus is extremely useful to those with diabetes
- Improves blood circulation and adds radiance to the face
- Improves digestive tract functioning, absorption, and assimilation of nutrients
- Results in a taut and trimmed down belly
- Energises the nervous system and rejuvenates brain cells
- Calms and uplifts the mind

**Caution:**

*Avoid practicing this breathing technique if you have an artificial pacemaker or stent, epilepsy, hernia, backache due to slip disc, or have recently undergone abdominal surgery.*

*Women should not practice Skull Shining Breathing technique during and shortly after pregnancy as well as during menstruation as it involves vigorous abdominal squeezes.*

*People with hypertension and heart problems should practice this breathing technique only under a yoga expert's guidance for a limited time.*

*Note: Please visit some renowned websites / google for detailed instructions on practicing Pranayama.*

**Disclaimer:**

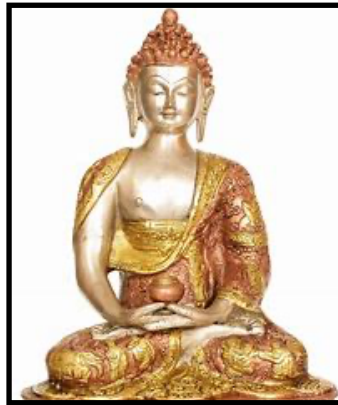
***Practicing Pranayama helps develop the body and mind, yet is not a substitute for medicine. It is essential to learn and practice yoga under the supervision of a trained Yoga teacher. In case of any medical condition, practice yoga only after consulting your doctor.***

# MEDITATION



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# MEDITATION



## ●Introduction

Meditation is a practice where an individual uses a technique – such as mindfulness, or focusing the mind on a particular object, thought, or activity – to train attention and awareness, and achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm and stable state. Meditation practices vary both between traditions and within them.

Meditation has been practiced since 2000 BCE antiquity in numerous religious traditions, often as part of the path towards enlightenment and self realization. The earliest records of meditation (Dhyana) come from the Hindu traditions of Vedantism, and meditation has a long tradition of being a practice in Hinduism. Since the 19th century, Hindu meditative techniques have spread to other cultures where they have also found application in non-spiritual contexts, such as business and health.

Meditation is the delicate art of doing nothing and letting go of all the efforts to relax into your true nature which is love, joy and peace. Meditation is that which gives you deep rest. The rest in meditation is deeper than the deepest sleep that you can ever have. When the mind becomes free from agitation, is calm and serene and at peace, meditation happens. The benefits of meditation are manifold. It is an essential practice for mental hygiene. A calm mind, good concentration, clarity of perception, improvement in communication, blossoming of skills and talents, an unshakable inner strength, healing, the ability to connect to an inner source of energy, relaxation, and rejuvenation are all natural results of meditating regularly. To be unconditionally happy and to have peace of mind, we need to tap into the power of meditation.

Etymology: The English meditation is derived from Old French *meditacion*, in turn from Latin *meditatio* from a verb *meditari*, meaning "to think, contemplate, devise, ponder". Apart from its historical usage, the term meditation was introduced as a translation for Eastern spiritual practices, referred to as *Dhyana* in Hinduism and Buddhism and which comes from the Sanskrit root *dhyai*, meaning to contemplate or meditate.

The main objective of the meditative experience is to shift the focus of the mind away from the frenzied thoughts of everyday living, such as worries about work, family, finances etc.

Meditation involves trying to train your thoughts to stay in the present moment, because in the present moment there is true peace. Thoughts of the future - what can/might/will happen, leading to fear or anxiety - ; and the thoughts of the past - what did or might have happened, leading to sadness, depression, anger, or jealousy - prevent us from feeling the peace that is in the present moment. Being totally focused in the present moment means that you do not think about the past or the future, and are freed - for as long as the meditation session lasts - from the negative emotions that accompany those thoughts. Posture for meditation:

Meditation may be used with the aim of reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and pain, and increasing peace, perception, self-concept, and well-being.

Of course, the ultimate objective of meditation is “attaining enlightenment”.

### ● Preparing for meditation:

If you've ever thought about learning to meditate, you know that there are a potentially overwhelming number of styles and techniques to choose from. *Vipassana* or Transcendental? Prayer, or Mantra ? Music or Quiet ?

Which technique you use is less important than reaping the rewards of a quiet mind. Beginners should start by finding a practice or technique that reliably puts them into a meditative state. Once this "core practice" is established, you can then begin to experiment with other meditation techniques and styles; always with the knowledge that you can return to one that works for you if you start to lose your way.

It's helpful for beginners to establish conditions for a meditation practice that will remain basically constant—the same time, the same cushion, the same quiet corner. Our minds and bodies have natural rhythms, and they respond positively to meditating at the same time every day and to visual and sensory cues like cushions, clothing, candles, and spaces dedicated to meditation.

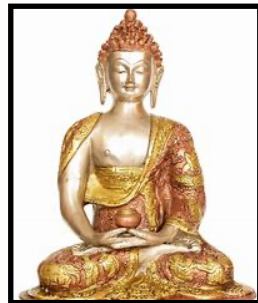
When you create the conditions for your meditation practice, you're not only setting up signals that tell your mind and body it's time to turn inward, but you are making it that much more likely that you'll sit down in the first place.

However, it may not be practical to adapt this method due to environmental factors. This should not deter you from practicing meditation. Some Gurus suggest the concept of “Anywhere Anytime”, a practical way indeed. Some people meditate while travelling by plane, train or the like. Some people find it convenient to meditate before going to bed at night when they are unlikely to be distracted. Primary objective is to meditate , whatever the circumstances.



**● Posture for meditation:**

1. Choose an optimal cool and convenient place.
2. Wear comfortable clothes ; not tight ones.
3. Sit on a yoga mat in a convenient asana such as Padmasana, Swastikasana or Vajrasana with Dhyana Mudra. Dhyana mudra brings deep contemplation, reflection, and the inner peace with meditative mind-state. This mudra improves the level of concentration.
4. The dhyana mudra is found throughout Buddhist tradition. Ancient Gautama Buddha's statues depict this posture. It is believed that Gautama Buddha achieved enlightenment by assuming this mudra while meditating.
5. How to do Dhyana Mudra: Place your right palm over the left, with both palms facing up. Keep them on the lap while connecting your thumbs in a triangular shape. The following pictures are self explanatory.



6. If you can not sit erect with straight spine to to any physical limitation, you may rest your back against a wall with a pillow if needed. Alternatively sit on a chair if you find it comfortable so long as your spine is erect, as a slumped posture constricts breathing, reduces alertness, and puts a kink in the energy running through the body.

**● Methods of Meditation:**

Can you think of an activity in which you totally lose track of time? When your attention is so focused that you say, "I don't know how the time passed?" Examples might be: painting or drawing, working in the garden, staring at the ocean, playing with your pet, playing a sport, listening to your favourite music, etc. All of these situations are meditative experiences because there are no thoughts about the past or the future; the mind is thinking only of the present moment.

If you are fortunate to have a hobby or some sort of activity in which you engage on a daily basis and that makes you lose track of time, consider yourself one of the lucky people who have a regular meditation practice without knowing it. However, the majority of people need to create dedicated time in our schedule to engage in a formal activity such as meditation to quiet the mind.

● Most common practice:

- FOCUS ON THE BREATH:

- The most popular concentrative meditation is to focus on the breath.
- This is extremely versatile, since no gadgets are needed, and it can be done wherever we are.
- The way this meditation is performed is to simply focus on your breath as it comes in and out of your body.
- Breathing in through your nose and breathe out through the nose, being aware of the air coming in and going out.
- By keeping your focus on the breath you prevent other thoughts from coming in. If they do, simply let them go-by as best you can, and return. The thoughts may rise like waves in the sea but subside soon on their own. Let the thoughts subside on their own; just do not aggravate them. Just concentrating on your breathing.
- Recommend time of duration; Number of minutes of meditation = Age of the person in years subject to minimum of 15 minutes and practical maximum of 60 minutes.

- VARIATIONS ON THE THEME:

There are many variations to this most basic script.

1. It can be done in silence or with music that you find relaxing. If you find your focus drifting from your breath to the music, allow it to happen; it is just another form of meditation.
2. You may feel you can control your mind better by adding the mental discipline of repeating in your mind a word or phrase in coordination with your breathing. An example would be the phrase “Hare-Rama and Hare-Krishna” thinking of the word “Hare-Rama” on the in breath and “Hare-Krishna” on the out breath.

*Note: Please visit some renowned websites / google for detailed instructions on practicing Meditation.*

***Disclaimer: Practicing Meditation helps develop the body and mind, yet is not a substitute for medicine. It is essential to learn and practice meditation under the supervision of a trained Yoga teacher.***

- End of the Chapter : Meditation -

# Epilogue:



The title of this book viz. “TOTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT (THM)” is somewhat akin to “TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) as practiced in a business enterprise to turn out a product or service of excellent quality. Total quality management aims to hold all parties involved in the production process accountable for the overall quality of the final product or service. TQM is a structured approach to overall organisational management. The focus of the process is to improve the quality of organisation’s outputs, including goods and services, through continual improvement of internal practices. To turn out an excellent product, we need to aim at maintaining quality in all aspects of the organisation viz. Design of a product, material inputs, production processes, physical environment, house keeping, HRD (Human Relations Development), quality control, and continuous monitoring of results. Having a good product design alone may not deliver an excellent quality product at the end unless all aspects of the organisation are excellent at all stages.

“TOTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT (THM), is quite analogous to “TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM). Our product here the HEALTH of an individual. Having good genes in an individual - akin to good design of a product in TQM - alone may not result in good health. For good physical and mental health we need to maintain quality in all aspects of our health management in terms of environment, inputs and processes. Basically we need to maintain a clean and pollution-free environment and a healthy life-style. The food we consume must have good nutritional value. The processes of achieving good health comprise certain actions such as regular exercise, practicing Yoga, Pranayama, Meditation and the like.

This book covers the relevant subjects - in the preceding chapters - in this endeavour viz. Importance of “*Vegetables, Fruits and spices*” in our diet; Practicing “*Yoga, Pranayama and Meditation*” for good physical and mental health and “*Mudra Therapy*” to cure various ailments.

The processes involved in maintaining good health are innumerable. These processes are enumerated - albeit in a concise manner - in the following page with a header “*How to live longer*”.



# HOW TO LIVE LONGER

## A. Normal Pre-requisites

1. Drink \*1 litre of warm water on waking up in the morning to detoxify your body.
2. Regularly Exercise and walk a mile or two a day.
3. Eat regularly at normally scheduled times (Chew well). Include plenty of vegetables and fruits in your diet which contain plenty of fibre, vitamins and minerals and have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Eat Curds or drink butter milk after meals (probiotics). Drink a glass of warm water half-an-hour before meals. Avoid eating excess or fatty food. No TV ... No Cellphone... while eating...
4. Avoid or minimise alcohol consumption. Avoid fatty or junk food.
5. No smoking at all.
6. Try and avoid stressful situations; Sleep for min. 6-8 Hours at night.
7. Maintain good oral hygiene: Brushing in the morning and before going to bed at night, dental flossing and massaging Gums.
8. Drink warm water all through the day (total about \*1+2 litres)
9. Have regular medical checkup; esp. Blood tests, BP, Heart etc. as advised by your physician.
10. Take health supplements such as iron, calcium, vitamins as may be advised by your physician.

## B. Beneficial Activities

1. Practice Yoga for an hour (Early morning)
2. Practice Pranayama for 20-30 minutes (Early morning)
3. Meditation: anywhere any time for an hour (Conveniently / Preferably before sleep at night). Duration: number of minutes equal to the no of Years of age subject to a minimum of 15 minutes.
4. Read Bhagavad Gita for spiritual health; **An excerpt from Bhagavadgita concerning yoga (Chapter 6) is reproduced in the next page for our ready reference.**

## C. Health Drinks with spices: Kashayams for immunity

1. Drink-1 in the morning on empty stomach: Boil half spoon of turmeric powder and 10 gm ginger in a cup of water; Add Honey and lime juice on cooling to warm temperature and drink.
2. Drink-2 Before going to bed at night: Boil Half spoon of turmeric powder, 5 mg black pepper powder, 4 cloves and elaichi (cardamom) powder in a cup of milk; Additional ingredient if available: Tulsi Leaves. Add honey after cooling to warm temperature and drink.

## D. Practice Mudra Therapy :

Practice a specified yoga mudra for cure of a specific ailment, as enumerated in the opening chapter of this book.

# BHAGAVAD GITA - DHYANA YOGA



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## Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Dhyana Yoga - The Yoga of Meditation



### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 11-12

Establishing a seat in a clean environment that is not too high or too low, a yogi should cover his sitting place with *kusha* grass, a deerskin and a cloth. Sitting on that seat, fixing his mind on one point and controlling all the activities of the mind and senses, he should practice yoga to purify himself.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 13-14

Holding the body, head and neck straight, he should remain still and steady, gazing at the tip of the nose without casting his glance in other directions. Undisturbed, fearless and observing a vow of celibacy, he should sit and control his mind by thinking of Me as his highest goal.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 15

In this way, the yogi controls his mind, withdrawing it from material desires. He then achieves supreme peace and liberation from material existence and attains My abode.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 16

One cannot practice yoga by eating too much or too little, nor sleeping too much or too little, O Arjuna.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 17

Yoga destroys the suffering of one who is moderate in eating and relaxation, who performs all activities in a regulated manner and is well balanced in sleeping and waking.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 18

When the steady mind is fixed exclusively upon the self, then one becomes free from all material desires – such a person is said to be situated in yoga.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 19

Just as a flame does not flicker in a windless place, similarly the mind of a yogi never wavers in its concentration on the self.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 20-23

When the mind is restrained and peaceful by the practice of yoga, it becomes detached from material desires. Thus one can perceive the self and attain happiness. Being situated in this plane of eternal bliss, which is beyond the scope of the mundane senses and obtained through intelligence, one never deviates from reality. Upon gaining this position, one considers that there is nothing superior to this and does not become disturbed even in the midst of the greatest calamities. You should know that this state of being, wherein all miseries are destroyed, is known as yoga.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 24

One should practice yoga with determination and an unwavering mind. In order to practice yoga, one must reject all thoughts that create material desires and withdraw the senses from the sense-objects using the mind.

### Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 6 - Verse 25

Gradually, one should still the mind by means of the intelligence, focusing it on the self and nothing else.

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# TOTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Mudra Therapy, Yoga, Pranayama and Meditation

Spices of Life, Fruits of the Earth and Vegan Vegetables

The word health refers to a state of complete emotional, physical and social well-being. There are many resources available to help people maintain optimal state of health. Good health is central to handling stress, living longer, and leading an active life besides ensuring good health of future generations. Health is an ability of a body to adapt to new threats such as an epidemic or a pandemic. Regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and adequate rest all contribute to good health. Mental health is as important as physical health. Good physical health working in tandem with mental health can enhance overall quality of a person's life.

Genetic factors also affect one's state of health as many people are born with a variety of genes. In some people, an unusual genetic pattern can lead to pre-disposition to ill-health. Environmental factors also play a major role in people's health. An environmental trigger may cause illness in a person who has an increased genetic risk of a particular disease. Other factors include those of social, economic or physical environment; not to speak of an individual's life-style. So the subject of health is complex and needs to be tackled in several ways. A chapter titled "How to live longer" is included in this book to addresses this issue.

Although the Benjamin Franklin's axiom that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" was originally addressing fire safety issue, many use this quote when referring to health.

The contents of this book address both the issues of prevention and cure; comprising various allied subjects viz. Yoga-Mudra Therapy, Medicinal Properties of Spices, Nutrition of fruits and vegetables, Yoga, Pranayama, Meditation and the like.



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Printed at Sri Kalanjali Graphics, Hyderabad, India



Anika Publications, Hyderabad, India

Price: India - Rs 500 , Elsewhere - US \$ 20

ISBN: 978-93-5419-388-0



978-93-5419-388-0