

Adhomukha Virasana

- Downward-facing hero pose -



THIS ASANA IS A VARIATION of the classic pose, Virasana (see page 84). *Vira* means "hero" or "warrior" in Sanskrit, *adho* indicates "downward", and *mukha* means "face". This is a very restful asana to practise as it pacifies the frontal brain, reducing stress, soothing the eyes and nerves, and calming the mind. It also helps to rejuvenate you after a tiring day.

PROPS (See page 164) A BOLSTER AND TWO BLANKETS. The bolster supports the head and eases stiffness in the back. A blanket supports the chest, while the second blanket under the thighs relieves painful ankles. If you have migraine, or a stress-related headache, wrap a crepe bandage around your eyes.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana if you have osteoarthritis of the knees, breathlessness, bronchitis, diarrhoea, or if you are incontinent. If you have a migraine or a stress-related headache, wrap a crepe bandage round your eyes and forehead.



1 Place a bolster on the floor and put a rolled blanket on it. Kneel with the bolster between your knees. Place the second blanket across your calves and heels. Lower your buttocks onto the blanket. Place both palms on your knees, your feet close together. Imagine you are pulling your kidneys into your body. Pause for 30 seconds.

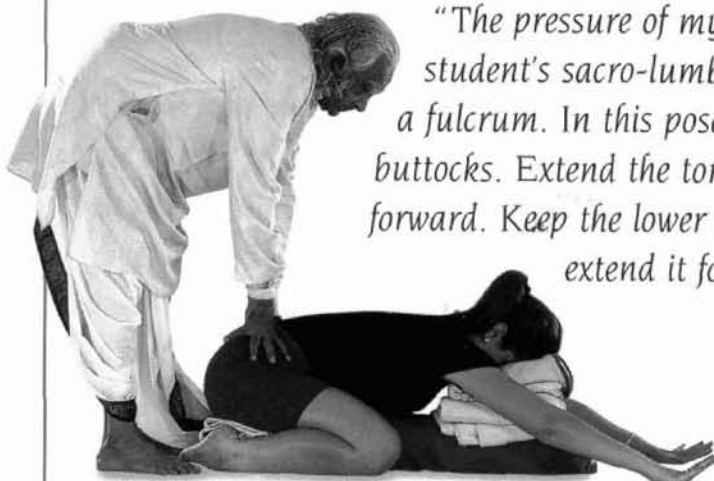


2 Move the bolster toward you. The front end should be in between your knees. Draw the bolster closer to your body so that it is just below your abdomen. Position the rolled blanket on the bolster so that you can rest your face on it. Now exhale, and move your torso forward. Stretch your arms out fully and place your hands on the floor, on either side of the far end of the bolster.

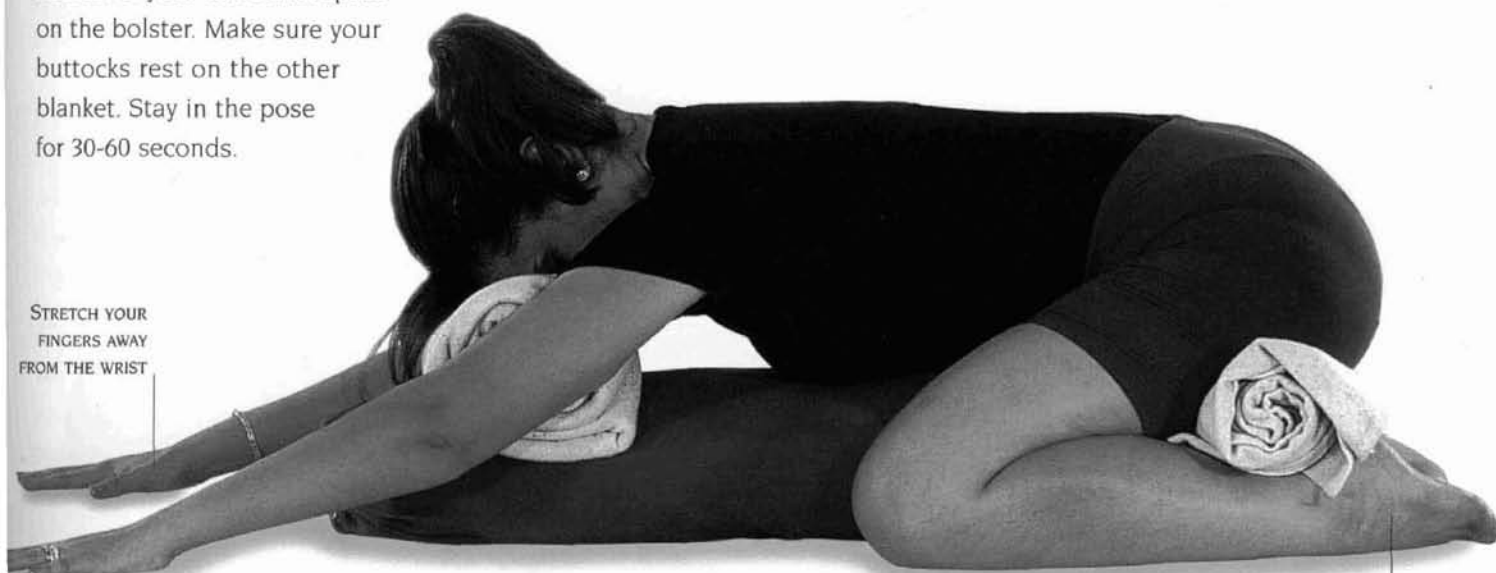
3 Lower your chest to the bolster. Stretch your arms forward, extend the nape of your neck, and rest your forehead and face on the blanket. Push your thighs down, and lower your buttocks toward the floor. Keep your abdomen soft. Open your armpits and extend your sternum. Push your chest forward, broadening your ribs. In order to relax your body, increase the forward stretch of your torso and spine on the bolster. Make sure your buttocks rest on the other blanket. Stay in the pose for 30-60 seconds.

THE GURU'S ADVICE

"The pressure of my hands on the student's sacro-lumbar area is like a fulcrum. In this pose, do not lift the buttocks. Extend the torso and hands forward. Keep the lower back firm, and extend it forward."



STRETCH YOUR
FINGERS AWAY
FROM THE WRIST



REST ON THE
FRONT OF
YOUR FEET

BENEFITS

- ◆ Relieves breathlessness, dizziness, fatigue, and headaches
- ◆ Reduces high blood pressure
- ◆ Stretches and tones the spine, relieving pain in the back and neck
- ◆ Reduces acidity and flatulence
- ◆ Alleviates menstrual pain and depression associated with menstruation



VARIATION 1 Two Bolsters

PROPS (See page 164) TWO BOLSTERS AND TWO BLANKETS. The bolsters help those with stiff backs to hold the pose easily. The added height makes it easier to lower the chest.

GETTING INTO THE POSE Place 2 bolsters in front of you and follow Step 1 of the main asana. Now move the bolsters toward you. The front end of the lower bolster should be between your knees. Draw the 2 bolsters closer to your body, so that the end of the top bolster touches your abdomen. Place the rolled blanket on the far edge of the top bolster. Now follow Steps 2 and 3 of the main asana.

Adhomukha Swastikasana

- Downward-facing cross-legged pose -



IN THIS ASANA, YOU sit cross-legged and rest your head, chest, and shoulders on a bench, bolster, and blanket. This is an extremely relaxing pose and relieves strain in your back, neck, and heart. It also alleviates the symptoms of premenstrual stress.

Regular practice of the asana helps people who are prone to anxiety, tension, and frequent mood swings.

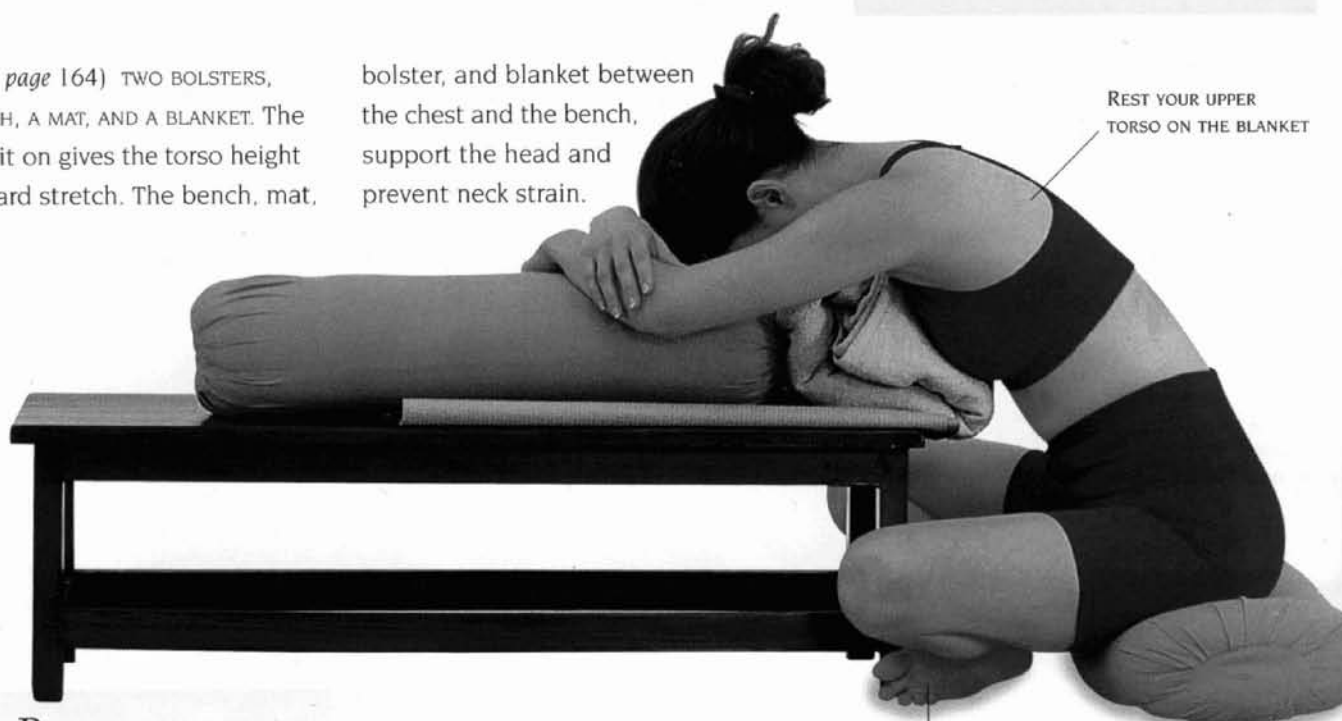
CAUTIONS

If your feet ache while you practise this pose, place a folded blanket under them. If you have stress-related headaches or a migraine, wrap a crepe bandage around your eyes.

PROPS (See page 164) TWO BOLSTERS, A LONG BENCH, A MAT, AND A BLANKET. The bolster to sit on gives the torso height for the forward stretch. The bench, mat,

bolster, and blanket between the chest and the bench, support the head and prevent neck strain.

REST YOUR UPPER
TORSO ON THE BLANKET



STRETCH THE SOLES
OF YOUR FEET

BENEFITS

Soothes the sympathetic nervous system, relieving stress and fatigue

Relieves migraine and stress-related headaches

Relieves palpitation and breathlessness

Helps to prevent nausea and vomiting

Relieves pain in the hip joints

Rests tired legs and improves blood circulation in the knees

1 Place a bolster on the floor at right angles to the bench. Place a mat and a bolster along the length of the bench. Place a folded blanket between the front end of the bolster and the front edge of the bench.

2 Sit cross-legged as in Swastikasana (see page 191) on a bolster. Ensure that you are sitting on the inner sides of your buttock bones.

3 Exhale, bend forward, and rest your chest on the folded blanket. Place your forehead on the bolster. Bring your arms forward and bend your elbows. Place your right palm on your left forearm, and your left palm on your right forearm. Exhale slowly, and feel the tension in the head and neck dissipate. Keep your neck muscles soft and elongated. Hold the pose for 2 minutes. Breathe evenly.

Bharadvajasana on a chair

- Torso twist -



THE CLASSIC VERSION of this pose (see page 108) is the basic seated twist, and can sometimes be difficult for beginners to perform. However, the asana can also be practised seated on a chair.

These adaptations of the classic pose

are recommended if you are elderly, overweight, or recovering from a long illness.

CAUTIONS

Avoid this asana if you have blocked arteries, high or low blood pressure, bronchitis, headaches, migraine, eye strain, diarrhoea, insomnia, fatigue, osteoarthritis of the knees, or during menstruation.

PROPS (See page 164) A CHAIR supports you and allows for effective and safe rotation of the torso.

1 Sit sideways on the chair with the right side of your body against the chair back. Sit erect and exhale. Hold the outer sides of the chair back.

2 Widen your elbows. Push the right side of the chair back away from your body, exerting pressure, while pulling the left side toward you. Exhale as you rotate, but do not hold your breath. Look over your right shoulder. Hold the pose for 20-30 seconds. Repeat the pose on the other side.



KEEP YOUR
LEGS APART

DO NOT LIFT YOUR
FEET OFF THE FLOOR

BENEFITS

Makes the spinal muscles supple

Relieves arthritis of the lower back

Reduces stiffness in the neck
and shoulders

Alleviates rheumatism of the knees

Exercises the abdominal muscles

Improves digestion

VARIATION 1

Legs through the chair back

SPECIFIC CAUTION Avoid this pose if you have varicose veins.

GETTING INTO THE POSE Step your legs between the chair back and the seat. Hold the seat with your right hand, and the back of the chair with your left hand. Lift and rotate your torso to the right. Hold the pose for 20-30 seconds. Repeat the pose on the other side.



Bharadvajasana

- Torso stretch -



THIS ASANA IS A VARIATION of the classic seated twist (see page 108). It works on the dorsal and lumbar spine, and improves blood circulation in the organs of the abdomen. Regular practice of this asana increases the flexibility of the entire body.

It also helps in the treatment of arthritis, cervical spondylosis, and rheumatism of the heels, knees, hips, and shoulders.

PROPS (See page 164) A BLANKET AND TWO WOODEN BLOCKS. The folded blanket supports the buttocks and helps to

keep the body straight. The blocks placed under the hands keep the spine erect and improve its rotation.

1 Sit in Dandasana (see page 82) on a folded blanket. Bend your knees and bring your feet next to your left buttock. Place your left ankle on the arch of your right foot (see inset). Press your knees together.



2 Place the blocks on their long sides, one behind the right buttock and the other beside your right knee. Then stretch your spine and inhale.

3 Exhale, and turn to the right. Move your right shoulder back. Place your right hand on the block behind you and your left hand on the block beside you. Press both hands down on the blocks. Raise your spine and chest. Exhale, and look over your right shoulder. Do not hold your breath. Hold the pose for 20-30 seconds. Repeat the pose on the other side.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana if you have a cardiac condition, high or low blood pressure, migraine, headaches, severe eye strain, a cold or chest congestion, diarrhoea, chronic fatigue syndrome, depression, insomnia, or osteoarthritis of the knees. Do not practise during menstruation.

BENEFITS

Alleviates stiffness and pain in the lower back, neck, and shoulders

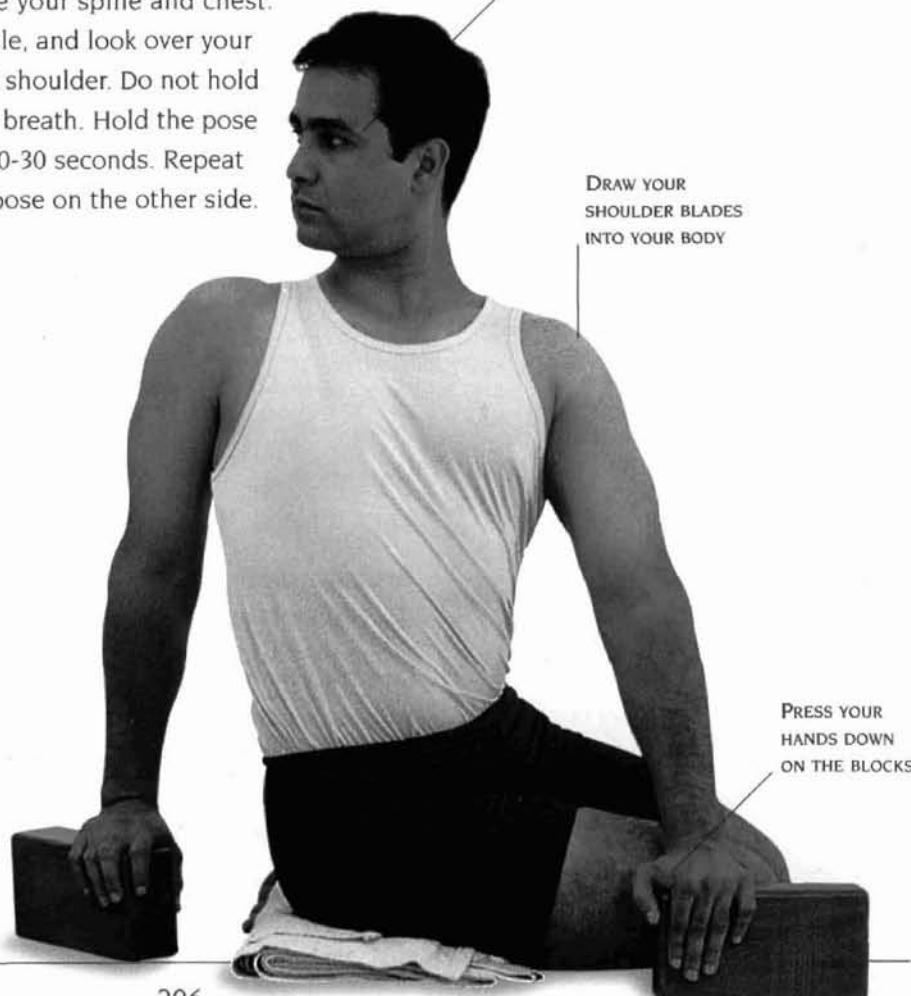
Reduces pain in the hip joints, calves, heels, and ankles

Relieves gout and rheumatism in the knees, and makes the hamstrings supple

Helps to treat disorders of the kidneys, liver, spleen, and gall bladder

Relieves indigestion and flatulence

Tones the muscles of the uterus



Marichyasana

- Torso and leg stretch -



THIS ASANA ADAPTS and combines the two classic versions of Marichyasana, one a forward bend, and the other a twist (see page 112). The props help to keep the torso centred and erect. They also enhance the rotation of the spine, working the dorsal and lumbar region. Practising this asana helps to reduce stiffness in the back, neck, and shoulders.

PROPS (See page 164) A BLANKET AND A WOODEN BLOCK. The blanket supports the buttocks and lifts the torso, increasing the spinal twist. It also prevents the

bent leg from tilting to the side. The block, placed on its broad side under the hand, improves the spinal twist and keeps the torso erect.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise if you have a cardiac condition, high or low blood pressure, migraine, headache, a cold or chest congestion, diarrhoea, constipation, chronic fatigue syndrome, insomnia, depression, or osteoarthritis of the knees. Do not practise during menstruation.

1 Sit in Dandasana (see page 82) on a folded blanket. Place a block behind you. Bend your right leg at the knee. Make sure the shin is perpendicular to the floor and your right heel touches your groin. Keep your left leg straight.

2 Bend your right elbow and place your upper right arm against your inner right leg (see inset). Place your left hand on the block behind you, keeping your left arm straight.



Press your right arm and your right knee against each other, with equal pressure. Press your left hand down on the block.

KEEP YOUR HEAD, EYES, AND NECK PASSIVE

BENEFITS

Alleviates lower backache and cervical spondylosis

Increases blood circulation to the abdominal organs

Aids digestion and reduces flatulence

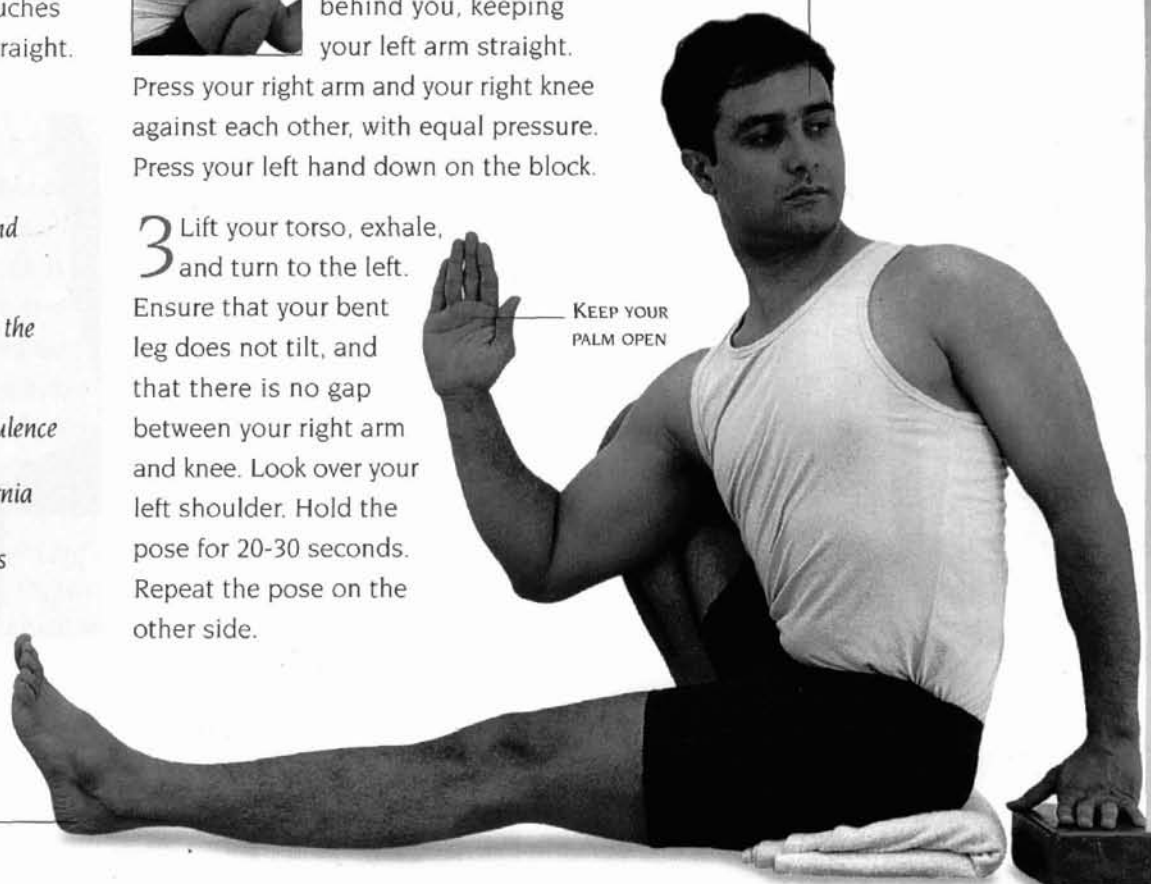
Helps in the treatment of hernia

Tones the liver and kidneys

3 Lift your torso, exhale, and turn to the left. Ensure that your bent leg does not tilt, and that there is no gap between your right arm and knee. Look over your left shoulder. Hold the pose for 20-30 seconds. Repeat the pose on the other side.

KEEP YOUR PALM OPEN

REST YOUR FOOT ON THE CENTRE OF YOUR HEEL



Utthita Marichyasana

- Intense torso and leg stretch -



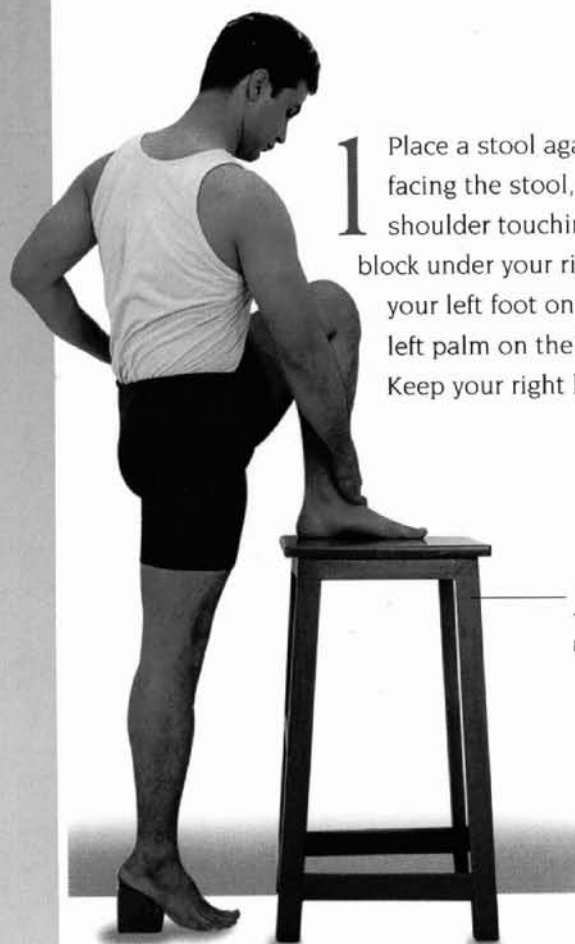
THIS VARIATION OF the classic pose (see page 112) is practised against the wall with the help of a high stool. This asana works the paraspinal muscles and ligaments, which rarely get exercised in our normal, day-to-day routine. The props allow the twist to be achieved without strain. Utthita Marichyasana is recommended for those with lower backache.

PROPS (See page 164) A WALL, A HIGH STOOL, AND A ROUNDED BLOCK. The stool makes the twisting action easier for

those with stiff backs. The block placed under the left leg allows for a more effective rotation.

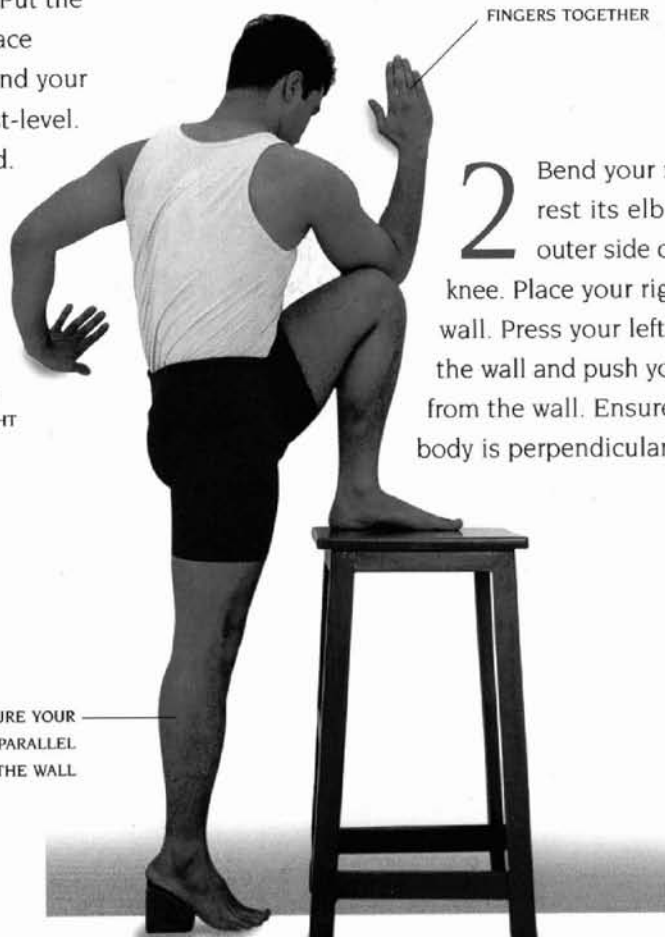
CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana if you have a serious cardiac condition, blocked arteries, high or low blood pressure, migraine, severe eye strain, a cold, bronchitis, breathlessness, chronic fatigue, depression, insomnia, diarrhoea, constipation, or osteoarthritis of the knees. Women should avoid this asana during menstruation.



1 Place a stool against a wall. Stand facing the stool, with your left shoulder touching the wall. Put the block under your right heel. Place your left foot on the stool, and your left palm on the wall at waist-level. Keep your right leg stretched.

ENSURE THAT THE STOOL IS AT MID-THIGH HEIGHT



KEEP YOUR FINGERS TOGETHER

2 Bend your right arm and rest its elbow on the outer side of your left knee. Place your right palm on the wall. Press your left palm against the wall and push your torso away from the wall. Ensure that your body is perpendicular to the floor.

MAKE SURE YOUR RIGHT LEG IS PARALLEL TO THE WALL

"Total extension brings total relaxation."

BENEFITS

Relieves stiffness in the neck and shoulders

Improves the alignment of the spinal column and keeps it supple

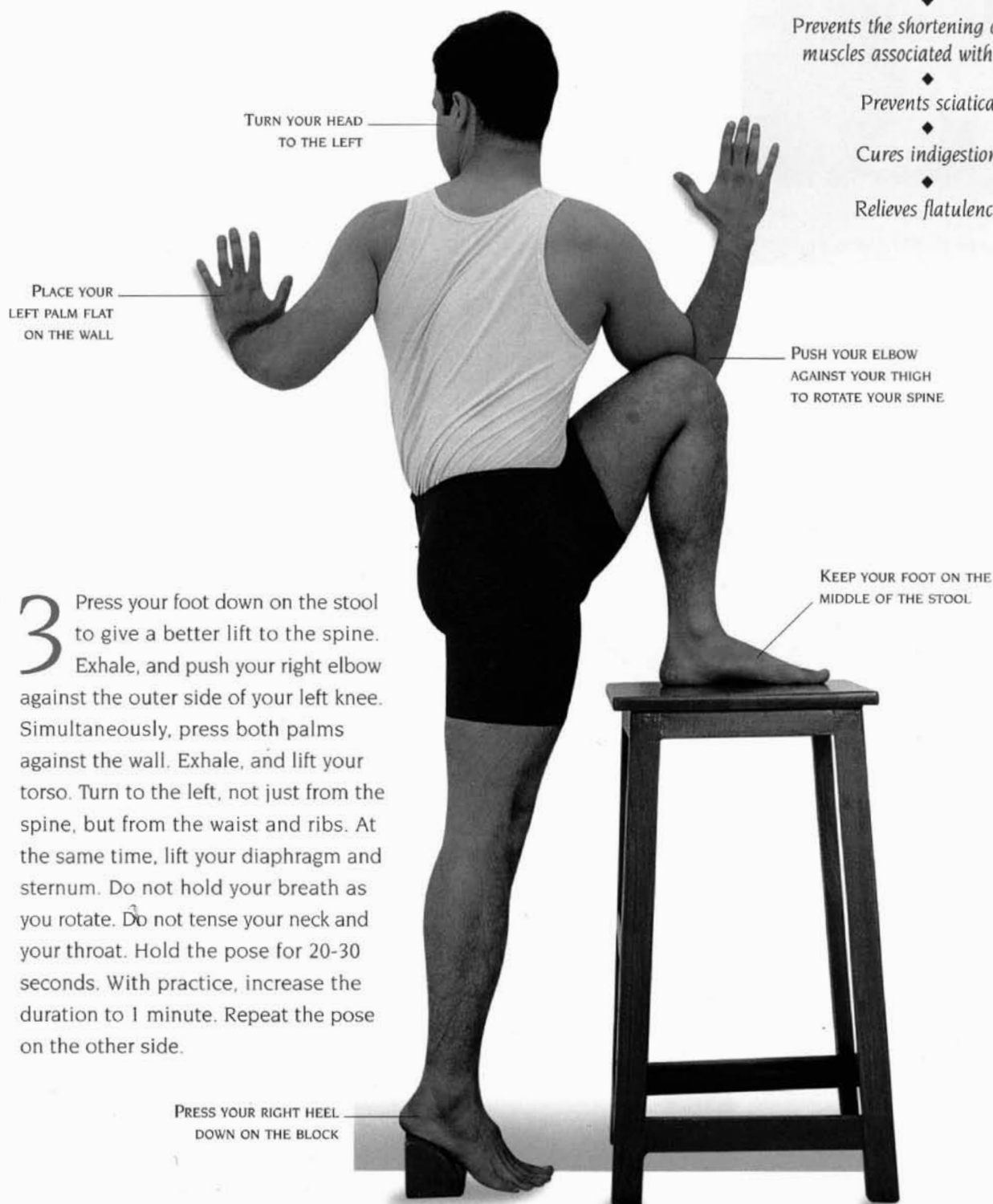
Alleviates pain in the lower back, hips, and tailbone

Prevents the shortening of the leg muscles associated with ageing

Prevents sciatica

Cures indigestion

Relieves flatulence



3 Press your foot down on the stool to give a better lift to the spine. Exhale, and push your right elbow against the outer side of your left knee. Simultaneously, press both palms against the wall. Exhale, and lift your torso. Turn to the left, not just from the spine, but from the waist and ribs. At the same time, lift your diaphragm and sternum. Do not hold your breath as you rotate. Do not tense your neck and your throat. Hold the pose for 20-30 seconds. With practice, increase the duration to 1 minute. Repeat the pose on the other side.

Parsva Virasana

- Side twist in the hero pose -



THIS ASANA VIGOROUSLY stretches the sides of your waist and back, improving blood circulation in the spinal area, and making the shoulders and neck more flexible. *Parsva* means "side" or "flank" in Sanskrit, while *vira* translates as "hero". This asana rests and rejuvenates tired legs, and is recommended for those who are on their feet for long periods.

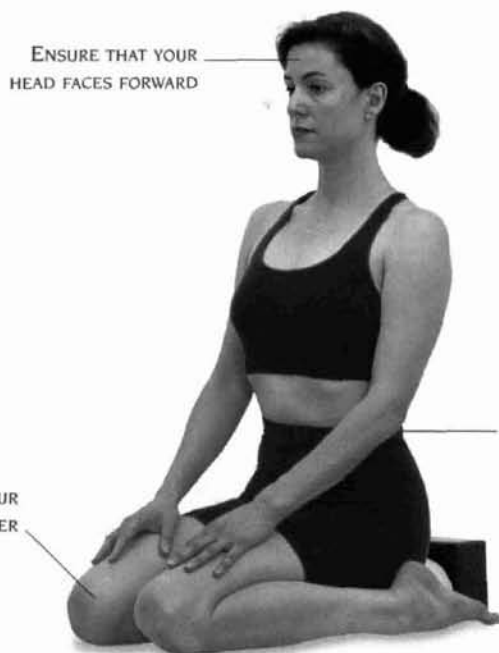
PROPS (See page 164) A BLANKET AND A WOODEN BLOCK. Sitting on the blanket reduces pressure on the knees and on the ankle joints. The wooden block,

positioned on its long side and placed under your hand, makes it easier for you to rotate your torso and to lift and stretch your spine more effectively.

CAUTIONS

Avoid this asana if you have blocked arteries, cardiac disorders, high or low blood pressure, migraine, headaches, severe eye strain, bronchitis, a cold and congestion in the chest, or diarrhoea. Do not practise during menstruation, or if you are prone to depression, extreme fatigue, or insomnia.

ENSURE THAT YOUR
HEAD FACES FORWARD

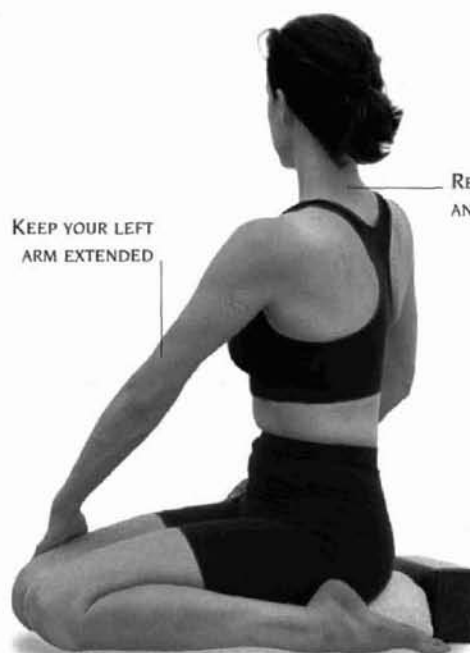


SIT WITH YOUR
BACK UPRIGHT

KEEP YOUR
KNEES TOGETHER

1 Kneel on the mat with your knees close together. Gradually separate your feet. Fold the blanket, and place it between your feet. Lower your buttocks onto the blanket, making sure that you do not sit on your feet. Place the block on the floor, behind your buttocks and parallel to them. Place your palms on your knees. Sit with your head, neck, and back erect. Pause for 30-60 seconds.

KEEP YOUR LEFT
ARM EXTENDED



RELAX THE NECK
AND SHOULDERS

2 Exhale, then place your left hand on the outer side of your right thigh. Rest your right hand on your right hip. The inner sides of your calves should touch the outer sides of your thighs. Push the inner sides of both heels against your hips. Stretch your ankles and then your feet, from the toes to the heels. Feel the energy flow through your feet.

BENEFITS

◆
Improves digestion and cures flatulence by exercising the abdominal muscles

◆
Relieves lower backache

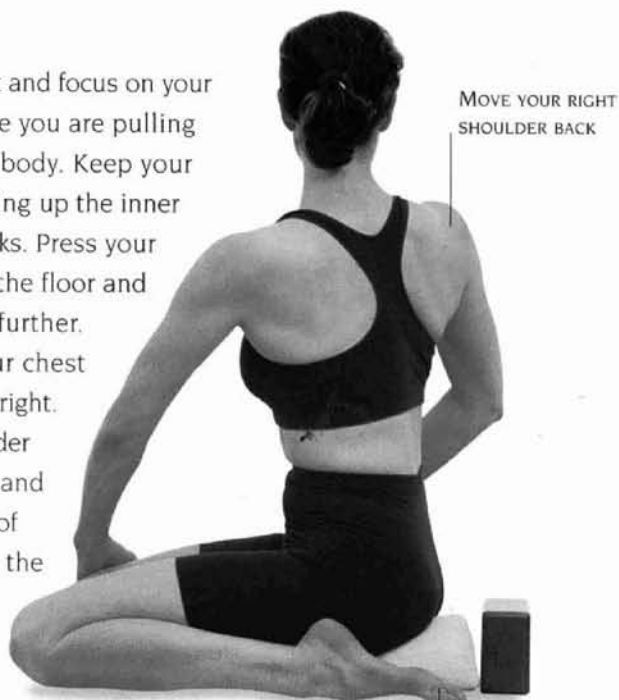
◆
Alleviates gout, rheumatism, and inflammation of the knees

◆
Lessens stiffness in the hip joints, and makes the hamstrings supple

◆
Reduces pain in the calves, ankles, and heels

◆
Strengthens the arches of the feet and corrects flat feet or calcaneal spurs

3 Open your chest and focus on your kidneys. Imagine you are pulling them into your body. Keep your spine upright by pulling up the inner portion of your buttocks. Press your knees firmly down to the floor and stretch your torso up further. Exhale, then turn your chest and abdomen to the right. Move your right shoulder blade into your body, and increase the pressure of your left palm against the right thigh.



MOVE YOUR RIGHT SHOULDER BACK

KEEP YOUR TOES ON THE FLOOR

TUCK YOUR SHOULDER BLADES INTO YOUR BODY

KEEP YOUR NECK STRAIGHT, BUT RELAXED

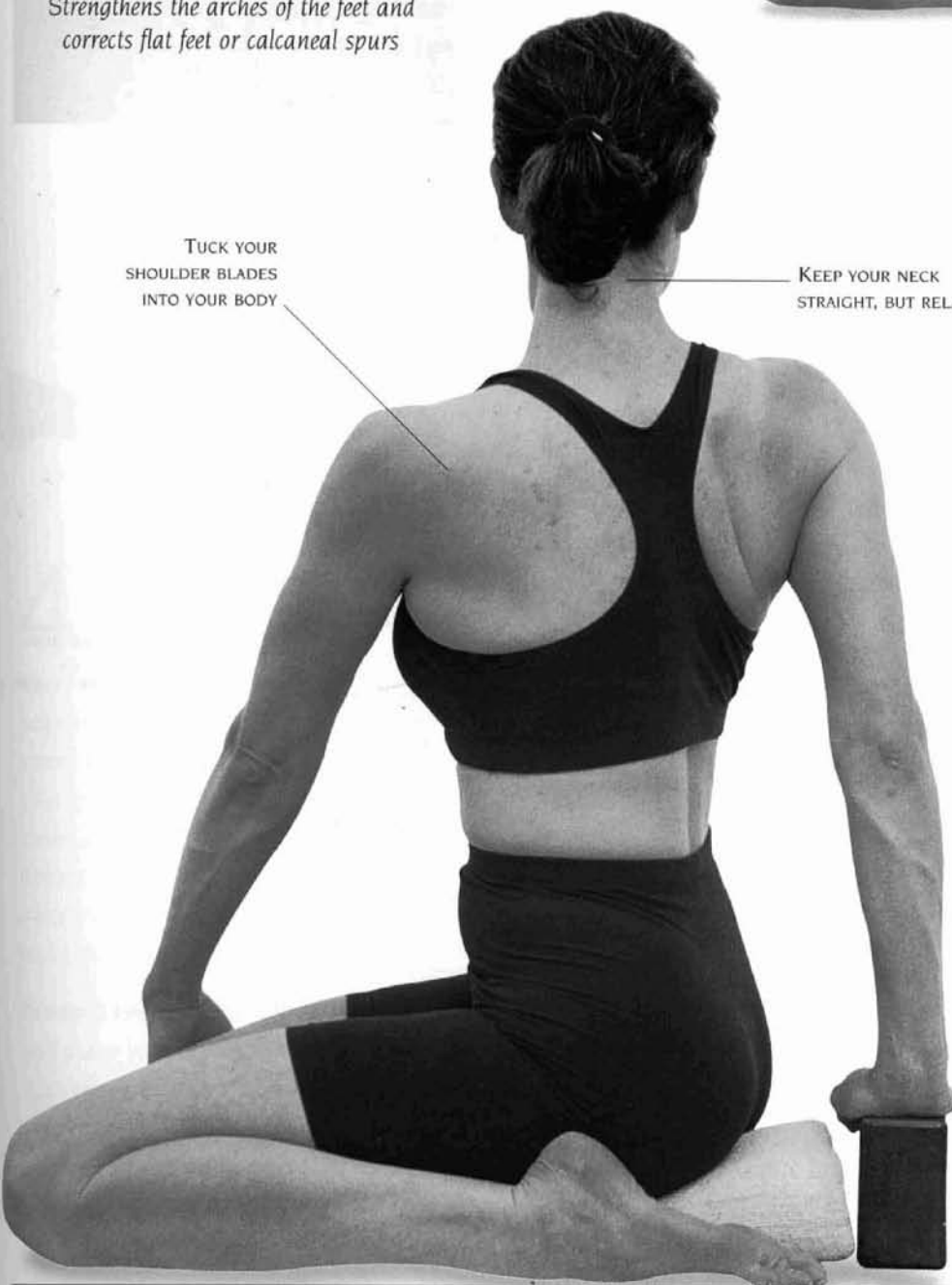
4 Turn, lifting your ribs and waist away from your hips, and twisting your torso further to the right.

Straighten your left arm and pull your left shoulder blade in toward your spine. Place your right palm on the block and press it down firmly. Ensure that your buttocks rest on the folded blanket. Exhale, and twist your torso even further to the right. If you feel discomfort while rotating your torso,



place a rolled towel under each ankle and sit on a wooden block

(see inset). Hold the pose for 20-30 seconds. With practice, increase the duration to 1 minute. Repeat the pose on the other side.



Salamba Sarvangasana

- Shoulderstand -



IN THE CLASSIC VERSION of this asana (see page 124), your hands and shoulders support your back, making the asana quite strenuous to practise. In this adaptation, a chair allows the pose to be held more easily and without strain. Regular practice

brings benefits to the entire body. This asana is recommended during recuperation after a major illness.

PROPS (See page 164) A CHAIR, A BOLSTER, AND A BLANKET. The chair supports the body, preventing strain, and helps you to balance better in the pose. Holding the back legs of the chair keeps the

chest expanded. The bolster supports the neck and shoulders, helping those with stiff necks. The blanket prevents the edge of the chair from cutting into your back.

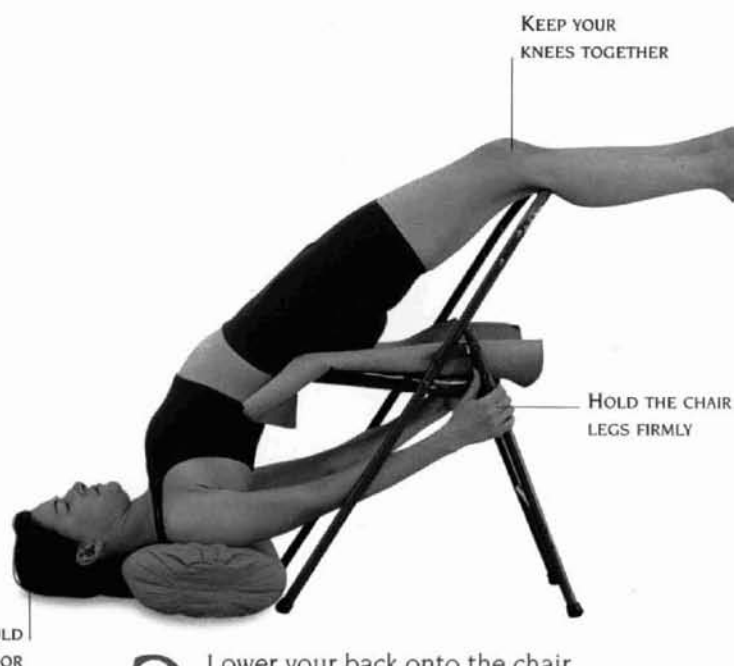
CAUTIONS

Do not practise if you have a migraine or a stress-related headache. Do not practise during menstruation.

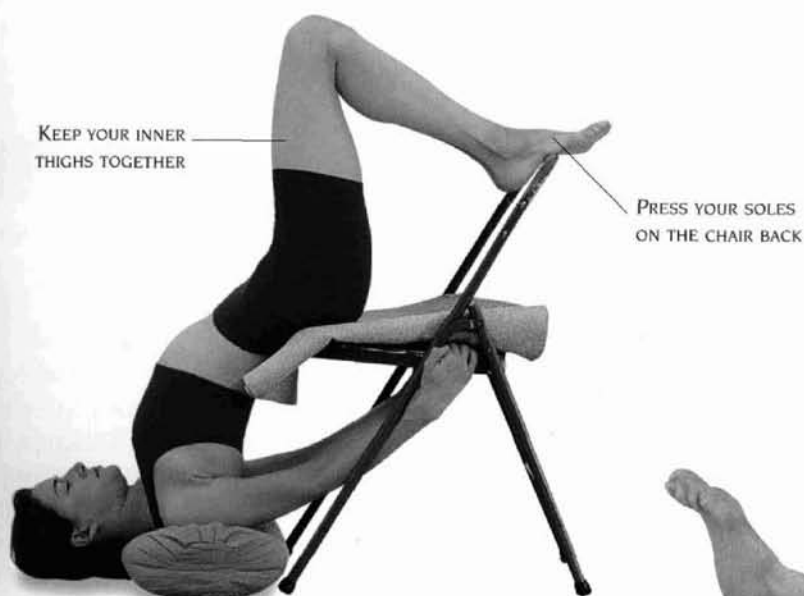
Ensure that your shoulders do not slide off the bolster onto the floor. This will compress the neck and might cause injury.



1 Place a bolster parallel to the front legs of the chair. Drape a blanket on the chair seat, so that it overlaps its front edge. Sit sideways on the chair with your chest facing the chair back. Hold the chair back, and place your legs on it, one by one. Slide your hands down the chair back and move your buttocks toward the back of the seat.



2 Lower your back onto the chair seat, and press your elbows down on it. Hold the chair back, then slide your back and buttocks over the edge of the seat. Rest your shoulders on the bolster, and your head on the floor. Pass your hands, one by one, through the front legs of the chair and hold the back legs. Straighten your legs and pause for 1 minute.



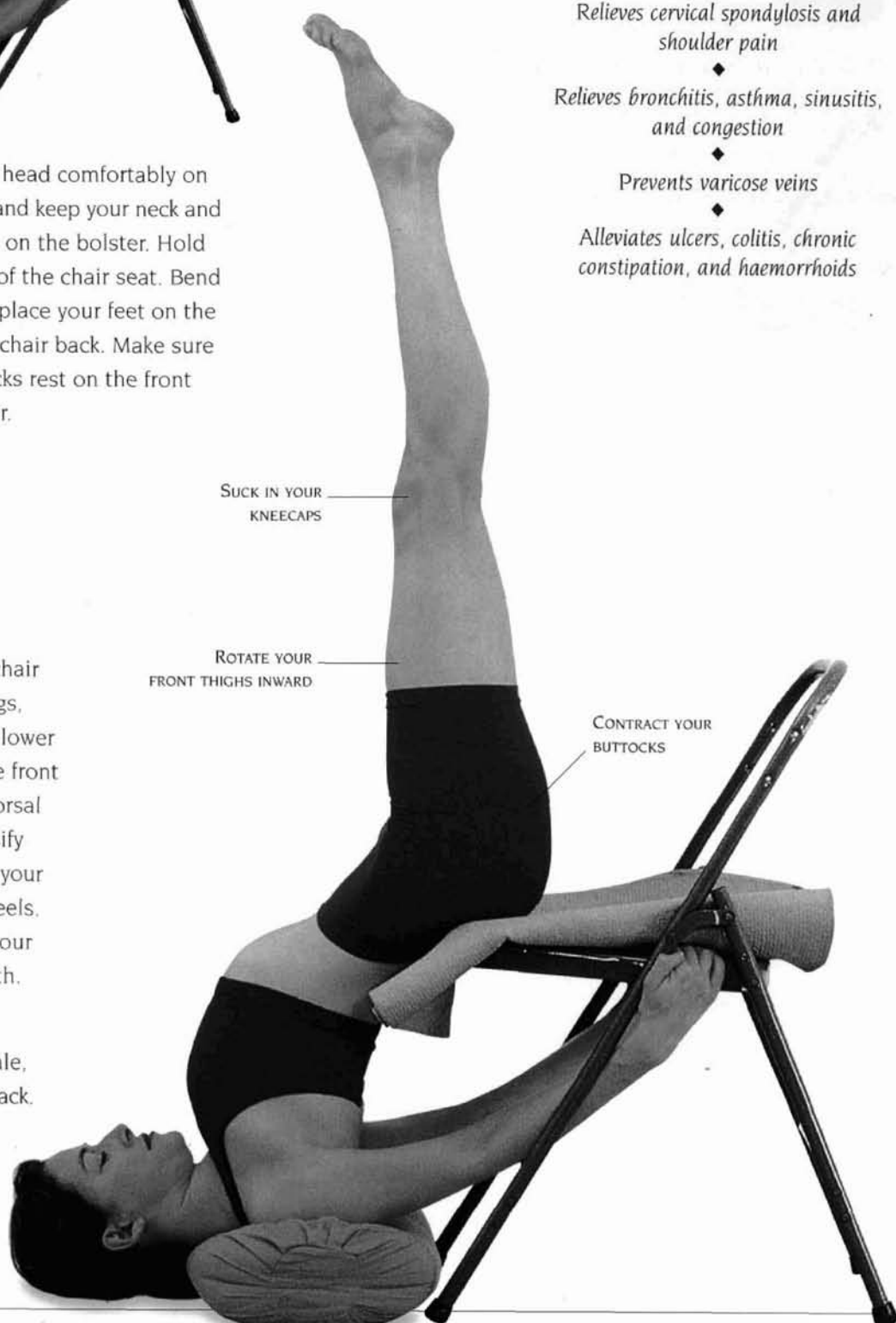
3 Rest your head comfortably on the floor, and keep your neck and shoulders on the bolster. Hold the back edges of the chair seat. Bend your knees and place your feet on the top edge of the chair back. Make sure that your buttocks rest on the front edge of the chair.

BENEFITS

- ◆ Relieves stress and nervous disorders
- ◆ Alleviates hypertension and insomnia
- ◆ Reduces palpitation
- ◆ Improves the functioning of the thyroid and parathyroid glands
- ◆ Relieves cervical spondylosis and shoulder pain
- ◆ Relieves bronchitis, asthma, sinusitis, and congestion
- ◆ Prevents varicose veins
- ◆ Alleviates ulcers, colitis, chronic constipation, and haemorrhoids

4 Maintain your grip on the chair seat and straighten your legs, one by one. Your buttocks, lower back, and waist should rest on the front edge of the chair seat. Lift your dorsal spine and shoulder blades. Intensify your grip on the chair seat. Extend your inner legs from the groin to the heels. Rotate your thighs inward. Keep your neck soft. Do not hold your breath. Hold the pose for 5 minutes.

COMING OUT OF THE POSE Exhale, and place your feet on the chair back. Push the chair away, slightly. Slide your buttocks and back onto the bolster. Rest for a few minutes. Turn on your right, slide off the bolster, and sit up.



Halasana

- Plough pose -



THIS VERSION OF Halasana (see page 130) uses a chair, a stool, and two bolsters to support the neck, spine, torso, and legs, allowing the pose to be held without strain. Practising this asana helps to alleviate the effects of anxiety and fatigue. The chinlock in this pose soothes the nerves and relaxes the brain. This asana is recommended for those with thyroid disorders.

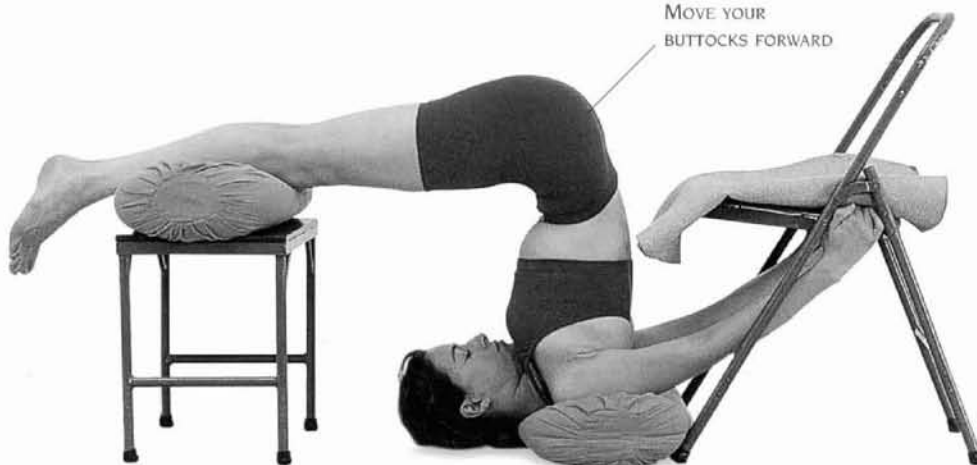
PROPS (See page 164) A CHAIR, A BLANKET, TWO BOLSTERS, AND A STOOL. The chair helps you to go into and out of the pose with confidence, and allows the spine to be stretched comfortably. The blanket draped over the chair's edge

cushions your back. The bolster placed beneath the shoulders prevents strain to the neck and head. The second bolster, placed on the stool, supports the thighs. The stool bears the weight of the body and supports the legs.

LIFT YOUR LEGS
ONE AT A TIME



MOVE YOUR
BUTTOCKS FORWARD



CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana if you have blocked arteries or cervical spondylosis. Do not attempt this pose during menstruation. If you suffer from osteoarthritis of the hips, backache, peptic ulcers, or premenstrual stress; or if you are overweight, separate your legs in the final pose. If you experience a choking feeling in the throat or heaviness in the head in the final pose, separate your legs.

1 Place a folded blanket on the seat of the chair, ensuring that it overlaps the chair's front edge. Place a bolster on the floor, its long sides touching the front legs of the chair. Place a stool about 60cm (2ft) away from the bolster, and position the second bolster on top of the stool, in line with the first. Now follow Steps 1, 2, and 3 of Salamba Sarvangasana (see page 212). Then, hold the back edge of the chair seat and bring both legs toward the stool. Keep your buttocks against the chair seat.

2 Place your legs, one at a time, on the bolster on the stool. Ensure that your neck is stretched and rests comfortably on the floor. Keep your shoulders on the bolster on the floor. Move your buttocks forward, until your shins rest on the bolster, and your torso is perpendicular to the floor.

BENEFITS

◆
Reduces fatigue, insomnia, and anxiety

◆
Relieves stress-related headaches, migraine, and hypertension

◆
Relieves palpitation and breathlessness

◆
Improves the functioning of the thyroid and parathyroid glands

◆
Alleviates throat ailments, asthma, bronchitis, colds, and congestion

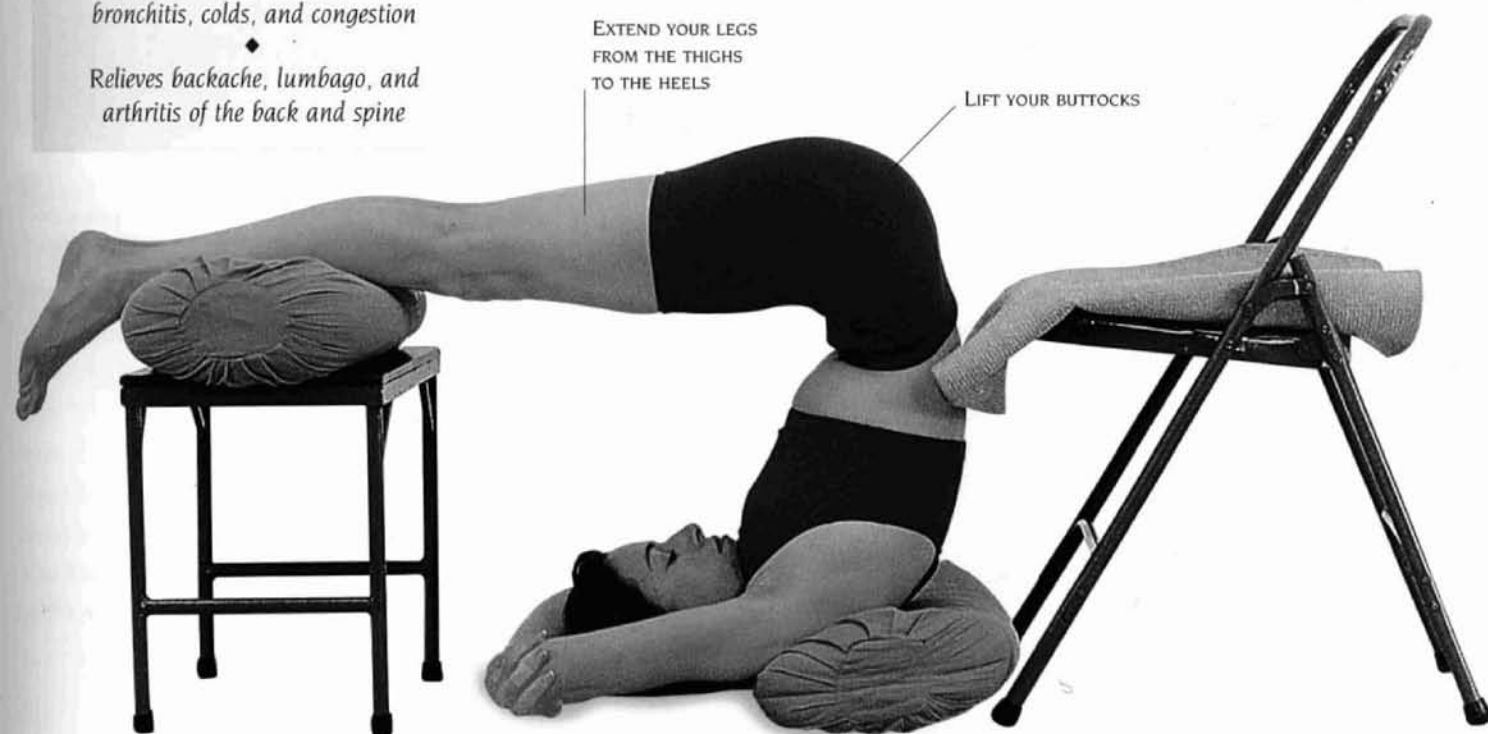
◆
Relieves backache, lumbago, and arthritis of the back and spine

3 Bring your arms back through the chair legs. Shift your weight slightly to the back of your shoulders, and bring your arms over your head. Rest them, parallel to each other, on either side of your head, palms facing the floor. Bend your arms, and place your left hand just below your right elbow, and your right hand just below your left elbow. Keep your abdomen and pelvis soft. Stretch both

legs from your heels to your thighs. Allow your eyes to recede into their sockets – do not look up. Relax your facial muscles and your throat. It is vital to keep your throat stretched in the pose. You must bring your chest to your chin, and not the other way round. As your brain rests, your breathing will become deeper and longer. Close your eyes. Stay in this pose for 3 minutes.

EXTEND YOUR LEGS
FROM THE THIGHS
TO THE HEELS

LIFT YOUR BUTTOCKS



COMING OUT OF THE POSE

After you have held the final pose for the recommended duration, open your eyes slowly. Stretch your arms out on either side of your head. Then follow Steps I, II, and III carefully (see right). Make sure that your movements are not jerky, as this might strain your neck or back. Pause for a few seconds between each step.



I Hold the sides of the chair. Move your hips back until your buttocks rest on the front of the chair. Lift your legs, one by one, off the bolster and place your feet on the chair back.



II Hold the front of the chair. Move your buttocks off the chair. Push your shoulders off the bolster onto the floor. Slide your torso back, until your head moves between the legs of the stool.



III Rest your arms on the floor, and your buttocks on the bolster. Rest your calves on the seat of the chair. Push the stool back. Bring your legs down. Roll onto your right side and sit up.

Viparita Karani

- Inverted lake pose -



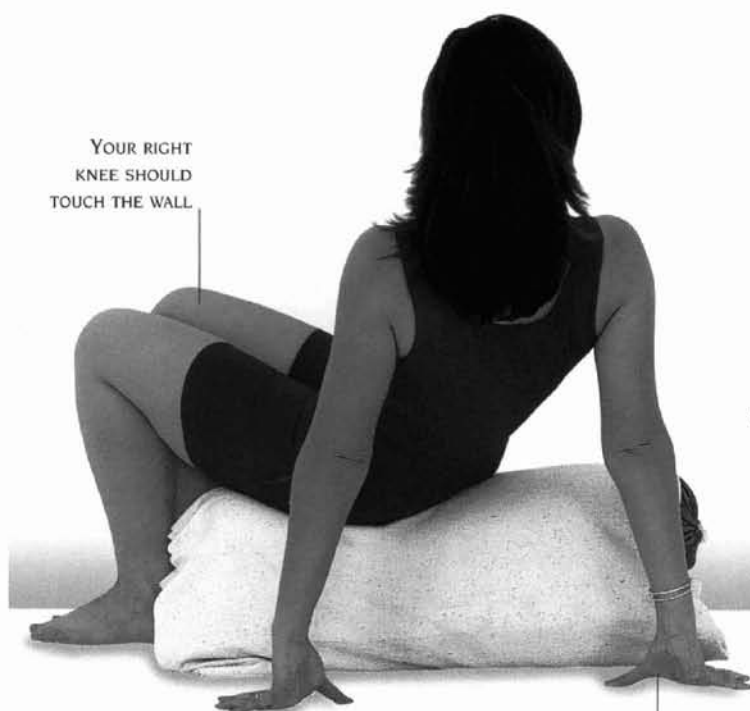
THIS IS A RESTORATIVE and relaxing asana, but the final pose is quite difficult for beginners and those with stiff backs. The use of props makes the pose easier and more restful. The name of this asana means "inverted lake" in Sanskrit, and is based on the belief that blood and hormones circulate better through the body when it is inverted. This asana alleviates nervous exhaustion, boosts confidence, and reduces depression.

PROPS (See page 164) A WALL, A WOODEN BLOCK, TWO BOLSTERS, AND A BLANKET. The wall supports the legs. The bolsters support the back and buttocks. A block

placed between the wall and the bolsters creates the space to lower the buttocks slightly. The blanket makes the bolsters and block a single unit.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise during menstruation, although at other times this asana alleviates menstrual disorders. Make sure that you rest your neck and shoulders firmly on the floor. If necessary, use just one bolster.

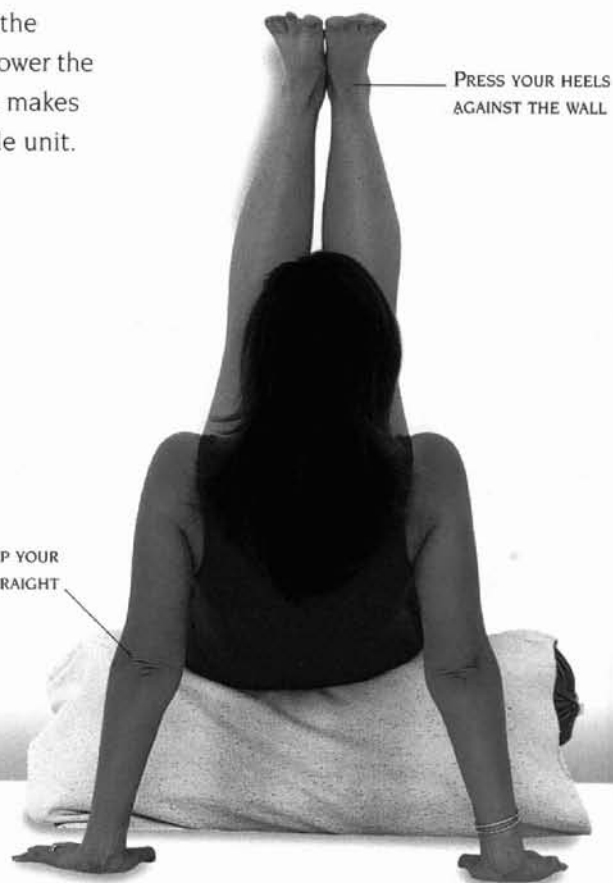


YOUR RIGHT
KNEE SHOULD
TOUCH THE WALL

KEEP YOUR
ELBOWS STRAIGHT

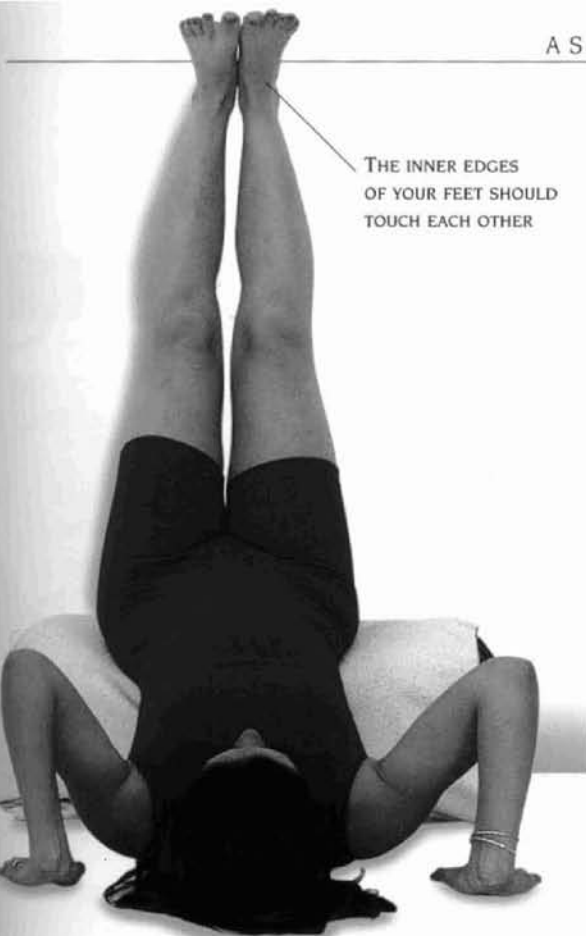
PRESS YOUR FINGERS
DOWN ON THE FLOOR

1 Place the block on its long side against a wall. Place the bolsters, one behind the other, parallel to the block. Drape the blanket over all 3 props. Then sit sideways in the middle of the bolsters, and place your fingers flat on the floor behind you.



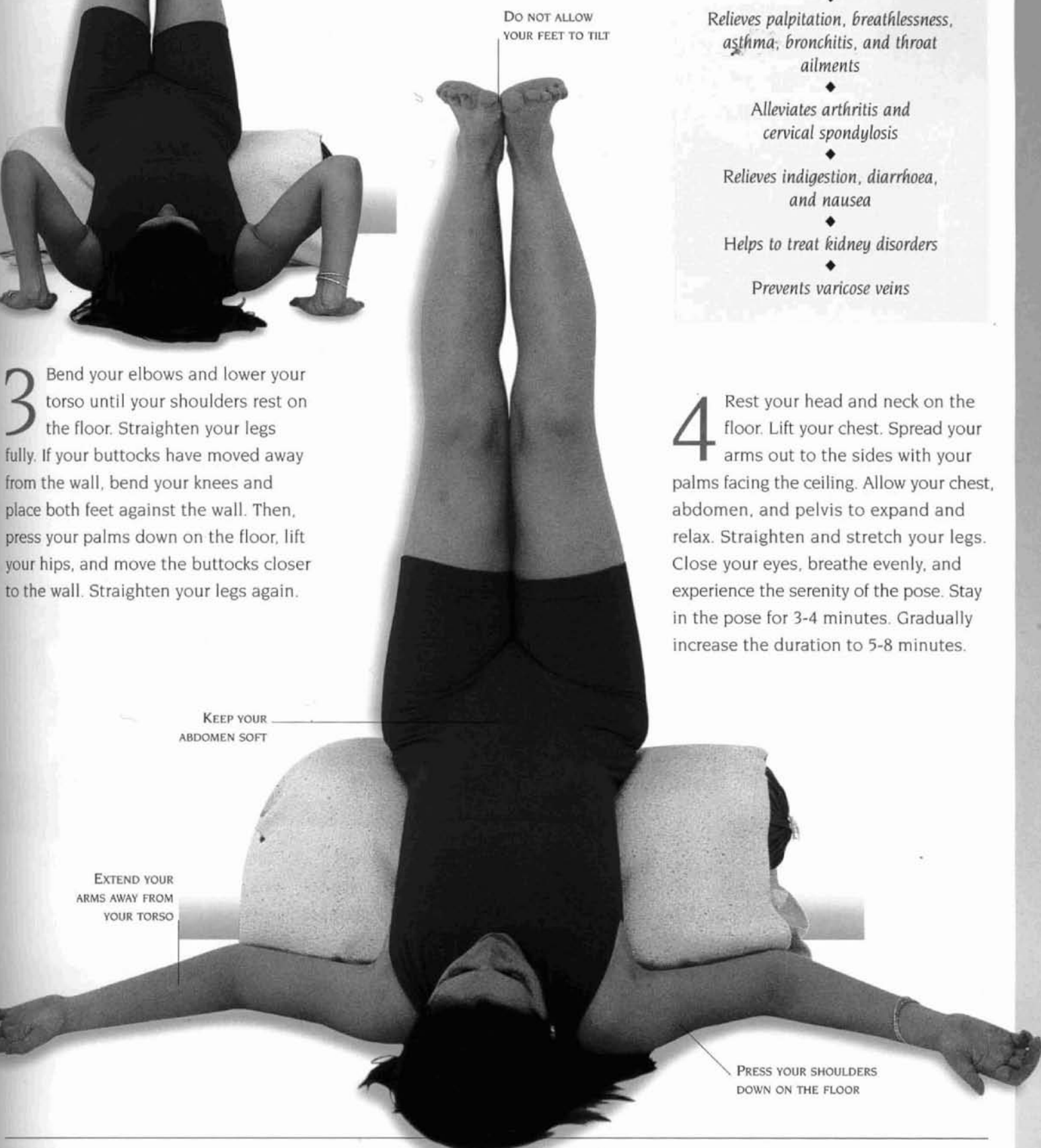
PRESS YOUR HEELS
AGAINST THE WALL

2 Turn your torso toward the wall, simultaneously lifting your legs, one by one, onto the wall. Keep your knees slightly bent. Support your body on both palms, fingers pointing toward the bolsters. Push both palms down on the floor, and move your buttocks closer to the wall.



THE INNER EDGES
OF YOUR FEET SHOULD
TOUCH EACH OTHER

3 Bend your elbows and lower your torso until your shoulders rest on the floor. Straighten your legs fully. If your buttocks have moved away from the wall, bend your knees and place both feet against the wall. Then, press your palms down on the floor, lift your hips, and move the buttocks closer to the wall. Straighten your legs again.



DO NOT ALLOW
YOUR FEET TO TILT

KEEP YOUR
ABDOMEN SOFT

EXTEND YOUR
ARMS AWAY FROM
YOUR TORSO

PRESS YOUR SHOULDERS
DOWN ON THE FLOOR

BENEFITS

Regulates blood pressure

Helps to treat ear and eye ailments, stress-related headaches, and migraine

Relieves palpitation, breathlessness, asthma, bronchitis, and throat ailments

Alleviates arthritis and cervical spondylosis

Relieves indigestion, diarrhoea, and nausea

Helps to treat kidney disorders

Prevents varicose veins

4 Rest your head and neck on the floor. Lift your chest. Spread your arms out to the sides with your palms facing the ceiling. Allow your chest, abdomen, and pelvis to expand and relax. Straighten and stretch your legs. Close your eyes, breathe evenly, and experience the serenity of the pose. Stay in the pose for 3-4 minutes. Gradually increase the duration to 5-8 minutes.

Setubandha Sarvangasana

- Bridge pose -



THE SANSKRIT word *setu* means "bridge", *bandha* translates as "formation", and *sarvanga* means "entire body". In this asana, the body arches to take the shape of a bridge. The chinlock in the asana calms the flow of thoughts and soothes the mind.

The pose sends a fresh supply of blood to the brain, resting and revitalizing the mind and body.

PROPS (See page 164) A LONG BENCH, A BOLSTER, TWO BLANKETS, AND A YOGA BELT. The bench stretches the legs and buttocks, and keeps the back arched. A bolster, with a folded blanket on top of it, supports the head and neck. Adjust the height and stability

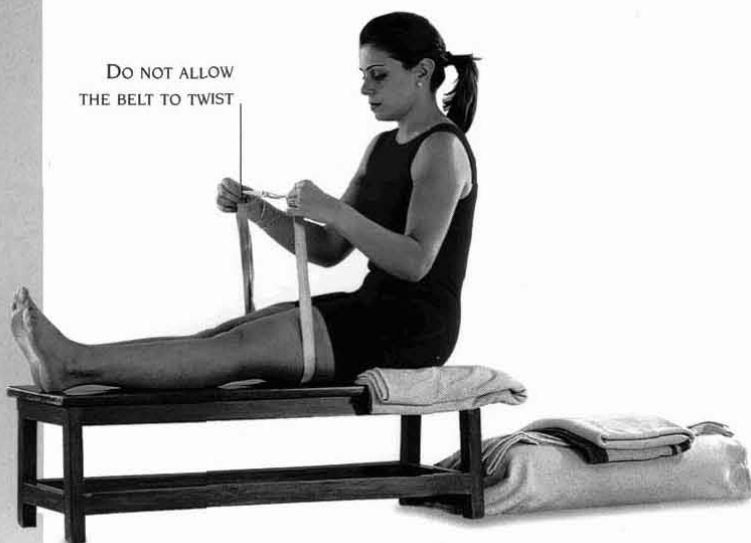
of the bolster by rolling a blanket around it, if required. The belt helps to keep the legs together without strain.

SPECIFIC BENEFITS The reverse movement of the torso in the pose strengthens the back muscles, relieving neck strain and backache.

CAUTIONS

Make sure that your lower back touches the edge of the bench in the final pose. Your buttocks should not touch the edge of the bench, but should not be too far from it, otherwise your shoulders will lift, causing neck strain. If you are recovering from a major illness, practise Variation 2.

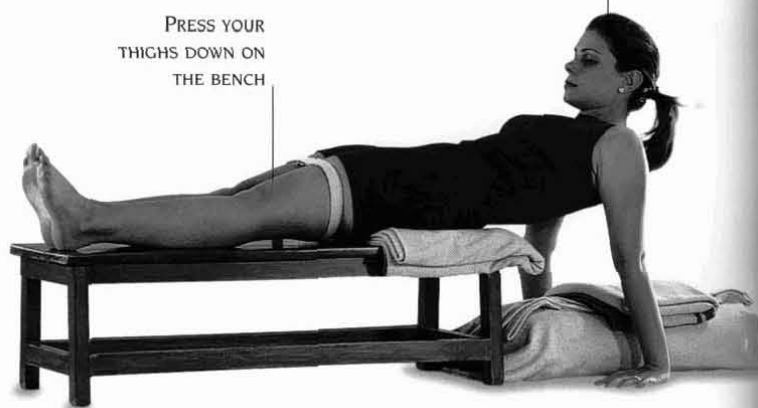
DO NOT ALLOW
THE BELT TO TWIST



1 Place a folded blanket on one end of the bench. Place a bolster on the floor in line with the bench, and touching one end of it. Place a folded blanket on the bolster. Then sit on the blanket on the bench, with your legs stretched out. Place a yoga belt under your thighs and bind it round the middle of your thighs.

DO NOT TILT
YOUR HEAD

PRESS YOUR
THIGHS DOWN ON
THE BENCH



2 Exhale, and lower your back toward the bolster. Press each palm down on the floor on either side of the bolster, your fingers pointing forward. Both arms should support your upper back. Keep your thighs, knees, and feet close together, your heels on the bench, and your toes pointing upward. Lower your arms to the floor.

3 Slide further down, until the back of your head and your shoulders rest on the bolster. Straighten your legs, keeping your feet together. Stretch the heels and toes away from the torso

to increase the stretch of the legs. Extend your arms to the sides on the floor, with the palms facing the ceiling. Hold the pose for 3 minutes. Gradually increase the time to 5-8 minutes.



BENEFITS

Helps to prevent arterial blockages or cardiac arrest by resting the heart muscles and increasing blood circulation to the arteries

Combats fluctuating blood pressure, hypertension, and depression by soothing the brain and expanding the chest

Relieves eye or ear ailments, migraine, stress-related headaches, nervous exhaustion, and insomnia

Improves digestion and strengthens the abdominal organs

Relieves backache, strengthens the spine, and relieves neck strain

Helps to rest tired legs and prevent varicose veins



VARIATION 1 With a Rolled Blanket

PROPS (See page 164) A LONG BENCH, A MAT, A BLANKET, A YOGA BELT, AND A BOLSTER. The blanket supports the neck.

SPECIFIC BENEFIT Helps to relieve cervical spondylosis.

GETTING INTO THE POSE Roll a blanket and place it on the centre of the bolster. Place a mat on the bench. Follow Steps 1, 2, and 3 of the main asana, bending your arms in the final pose. A bolster under the calves



(see inset), stretches the legs, prevents varicose veins, and relieves osteoarthritis of the hips and knees.



VARIATION 2 On 4 Bolsters

PROPS (See page 164) FOUR BOLSTERS, A MAT, AND THREE YOGA BELTS. This variation is easier for beginners, and if you are elderly, overweight, or convalescent.

SPECIFIC BENEFITS The bolsters help to increase chest expansion, relieving breathlessness and chronic bronchitis.

GETTING INTO THE POSE Place 2 bolsters lengthwise on a mat. Place 2 more bolsters over these. Bind each set and your thighs with yoga belts. Lie on the bolsters. Slide down until your head and shoulders rest on the mat, your palms on either side of your head. Then follow Step 3 of the main asana.

Viparita Dandasana

- Inverted staff pose -



IN THE CLASSIC VERSION of this asana, the feet, hands, and head rest on the earth. The pose is believed to symbolize the yogi's salutation to the divine force. This adaptation with props makes the pose easier to practise, and helps to soothe an emotional or restless mind. The word *viparita* means "inverted" in Sanskrit, while *danda* translates as "staff".

PROPS (See page 164) A CHAIR, A BOLSTER, A BLANKET, A MAT, AND A TOWEL. The chair supports your back and increases the flexibility of the neck and shoulders. Holding the chair's legs expands the chest, relieving respiratory and heart

ailments. The bolster, with the blanket on top of it, supports the head. This soothes the nerves, and regulates blood pressure. The mat prevents the chair's edge from cutting into your back. The towel supports the lumbar spine.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana during an attack of migraine. Avoid the pose if you have stress-related headaches, eye strain, constipation, diarrhoea, or insomnia. Discontinue the asana if you feel dizzy. If you suffer from backache, you must practise a few twists before and after this pose.

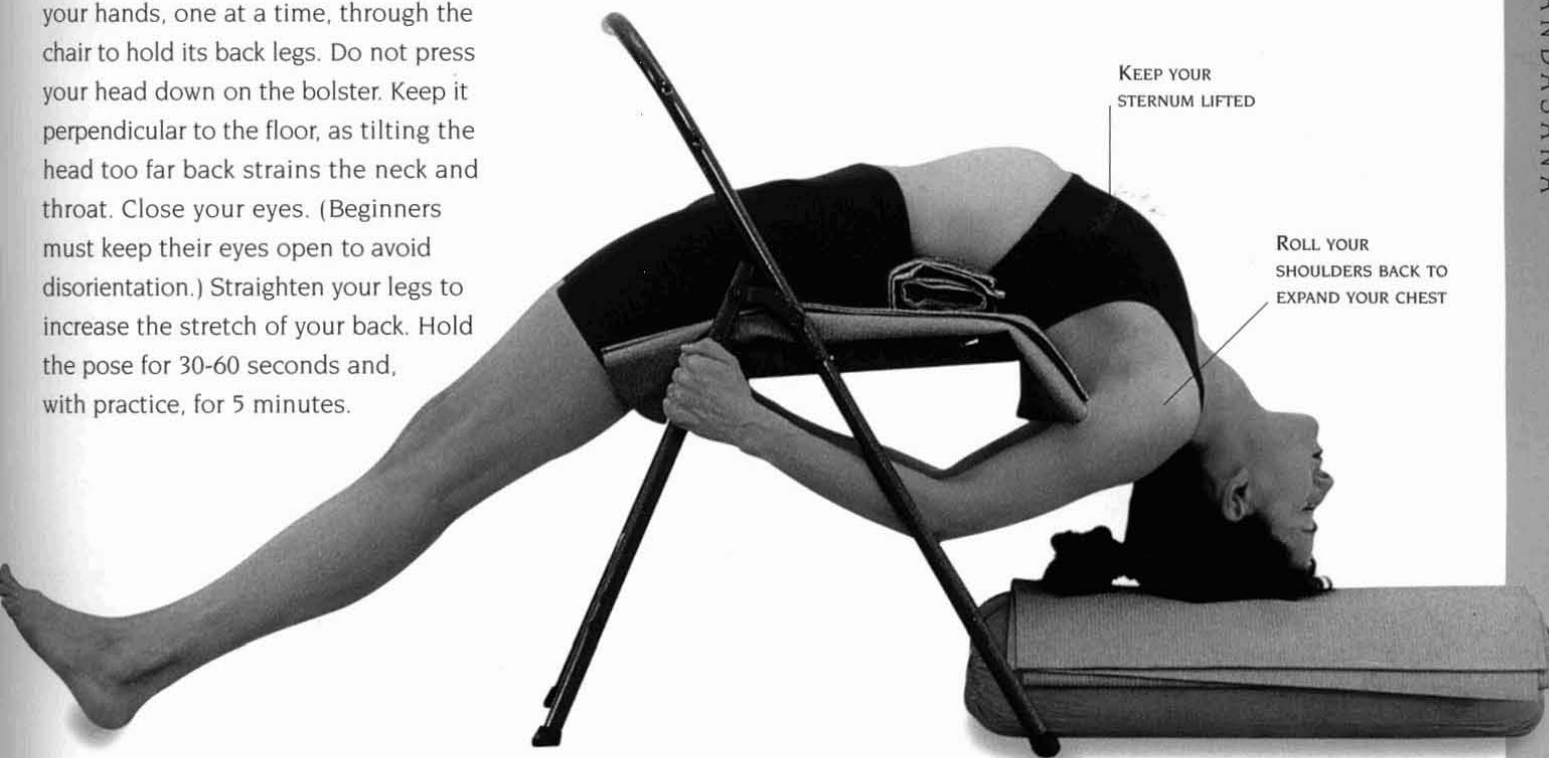


1 Place the bolster in front of the chair, with one end between the chair's front legs. Place a blanket on the bolster. Drape the mat over the chair's front edge and place the folded towel on the mat. Step your feet through the back of the chair, and sit down. If needed, tie a yoga belt round your legs to keep them together (see inset).



2 Hold the sides of the chair back and slide your hips toward the back of the chair until your buttocks rest on the back edge of the chair. Exhale, and lift your chest, arching your entire back. Lower your torso, ensuring that the folded towel supports your lumbar spine.

3 Place your crown on the bolster. Ensure that your lower back rests on the front edge of the seat. Insert your hands, one at a time, through the chair to hold its back legs. Do not press your head down on the bolster. Keep it perpendicular to the floor, as tilting the head too far back strains the neck and throat. Close your eyes. (Beginners must keep their eyes open to avoid disorientation.) Straighten your legs to increase the stretch of your back. Hold the pose for 30-60 seconds and, with practice, for 5 minutes.

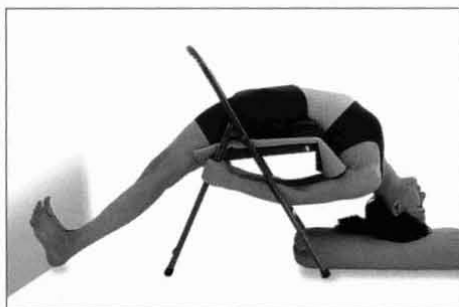


VARIATION 1 Feet on a Stool

PROPS (See page 164) A CHAIR, A LOW OPEN STOOL, A ROLLED TOWEL, A FOLDED BLANKET, A MAT, A BOLSTER, AND A YOGA BELT. The stool supports the feet. The belt keeps the legs together.

SPECIFIC BENEFITS Relieves diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, and indigestion. Alleviates cervical spondylosis. Reduces pain in the back, shoulders, and neck.

GETTING INTO THE POSE Place a stool 60cm (2ft) from the chair. Follow Step 1 of the main asana. Place your legs on the stool, and follow Steps 2-3.



VARIATION 2 Feet against a Wall

PROPS (See page 164) A WALL, A CHAIR, A ROLLED TOWEL, A FOLDED BLANKET, AND A MAT. The wall supports the feet and intensifies the final stretch.

SPECIFIC BENEFITS Prevents varicose veins. Tones the hamstrings, ankles, and heels.

GETTING INTO THE POSE Place the chair about 60cm (2ft) from the wall. Follow Steps 1, 2, and 3 of the main asana, but press your soles against the wall. Stretch your legs, pushing the chair a little away from the wall, if necessary.

BENEFITS

- ◆ Soothes and relaxes the brain
- ◆ Builds up emotional stability and self-confidence
- ◆ Stimulates the adrenal, thyroid, pituitary, and pineal glands
- ◆ Gently massages and strengthens the heart, preventing arterial blockage
- ◆ Increases lung capacity
- ◆ Relieves indigestion and flatulence
- ◆ Increases the flexibility of the spine
- ◆ Alleviates lower backache
- ◆ Corrects a displaced bladder or prolapsed uterus
- ◆ Relieves menstrual pain and helps to treat the symptoms of menopause

Ustrasana

- Camel pose -



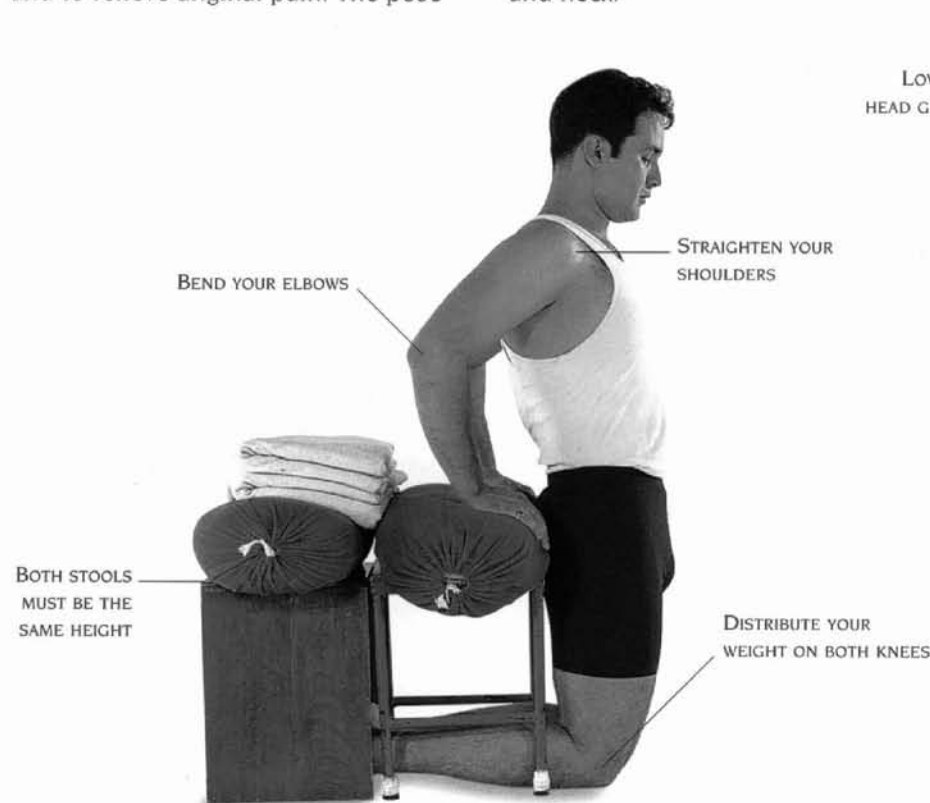
THIS VERSION OF THE classic pose (see page 136), uses props to support the back, making the asana less strenuous to practise. The expansion of the chest in the pose alleviates stress by calming turbulent emotions. If you are feeling depressed, or are prone to mood swings or anxiety, this will help to boost your self-confidence. The pose is especially beneficial to adolescents.

PROPS (See page 164) A LOW, OPEN STOOL, A HALF-HALASANA STOOL, TWO BOLSTERS, AND TWO FOLDED BLANKETS. The stools support the back, gently massaging the heart and increasing coronary blood flow. This helps to prevent arterial blockages and to relieve anginal pain. The pose

lifts the torso and diaphragm, expands the lungs, and rests the brain. The bolsters, one placed on each stool, support the back and head, so that the back is symmetrically curved in the pose. The blankets support the head and neck.

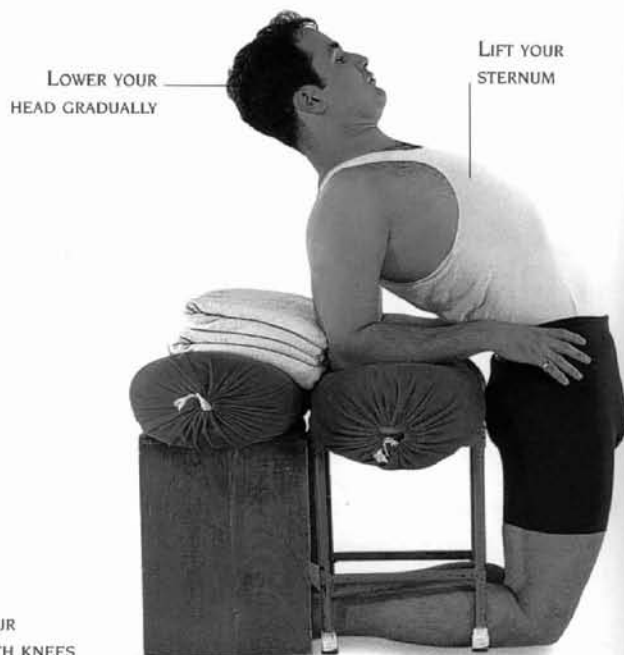
CAUTIONS

Avoid this asana if you have low or high blood pressure, migraine, stress-related headaches, eye strain, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis of the knees, diarrhoea, constipation, or if you are prone to alcohol abuse or insomnia. Do not practise the pose during menstruation.



1 Place the stool with the open sides on the floor, with a bolster across it. Place the second stool behind it. Position a bolster on this stool and put the blankets on it. Kneel in front of the

stool with the open sides, and rest your palms on the bolster placed on it. Move your calves, one by one, between the legs of the stool. Your buttocks should touch the bolster on the stool.



2 Gradually arch your back, and lower your torso toward the bolster on the low, open stool. Broaden your chest as you move your elbows down on the first bolster. Then press your elbows down on the bolster, and place your palms on your hips. Move your head back, toward the folded blankets on the second stool.

THE GURU'S ADVICE

"Once your head is placed on the folded blankets, you must ensure that you open the ribs, and move the shoulder blades into the body. Look at how I am pressing my student's shoulders back with my thumbs. Roll the armpits and chest forward and up. Lift your sternum. As your chest moves up, make sure that your head extends back on the blankets."



BENEFITS

◆ Enhances resistance to infections

◆ Stimulates the adrenal, pituitary, pineal, and thyroid glands

◆ Increases lung capacity, and helps to maintain the elasticity of lung tissue

◆ Tones the liver, kidneys, and spleen

◆ Tones the spine, relieving lower backache and arthritic pain in the back

◆ Helps to prevent varicose veins by toning the legs, hamstrings, and ankles

◆ Helps to correct a prolapsed uterus, by stretching the pelvic area

◆ Improves blood circulation to the ovaries and tones them

◆ Relieves menstrual pain and the symptoms of menopause

RELAX YOUR
FACIAL MUSCLES

KEEP YOUR
CHEST EXPANDED

STRETCH YOUR
ABDOMEN



3 Lower your torso onto the bolster on the open stool, until your head rests on the folded blankets on the second stool. Arch your neck, but do not strain your throat. Press your shins to the floor, and push the thighbones forward, away from the stool. Roll your shoulders back and move your shoulder blades toward your spine. Pull your spine, tailbone, and back muscles into your body. Stretch your thighs, hips, and buttocks. Close your eyes. Breathe evenly. Hold the pose for 1 minute. With practice, increase the duration to 3 minutes.

Supta Padangusthasana

- Reclining leg, foot, and toe stretch -



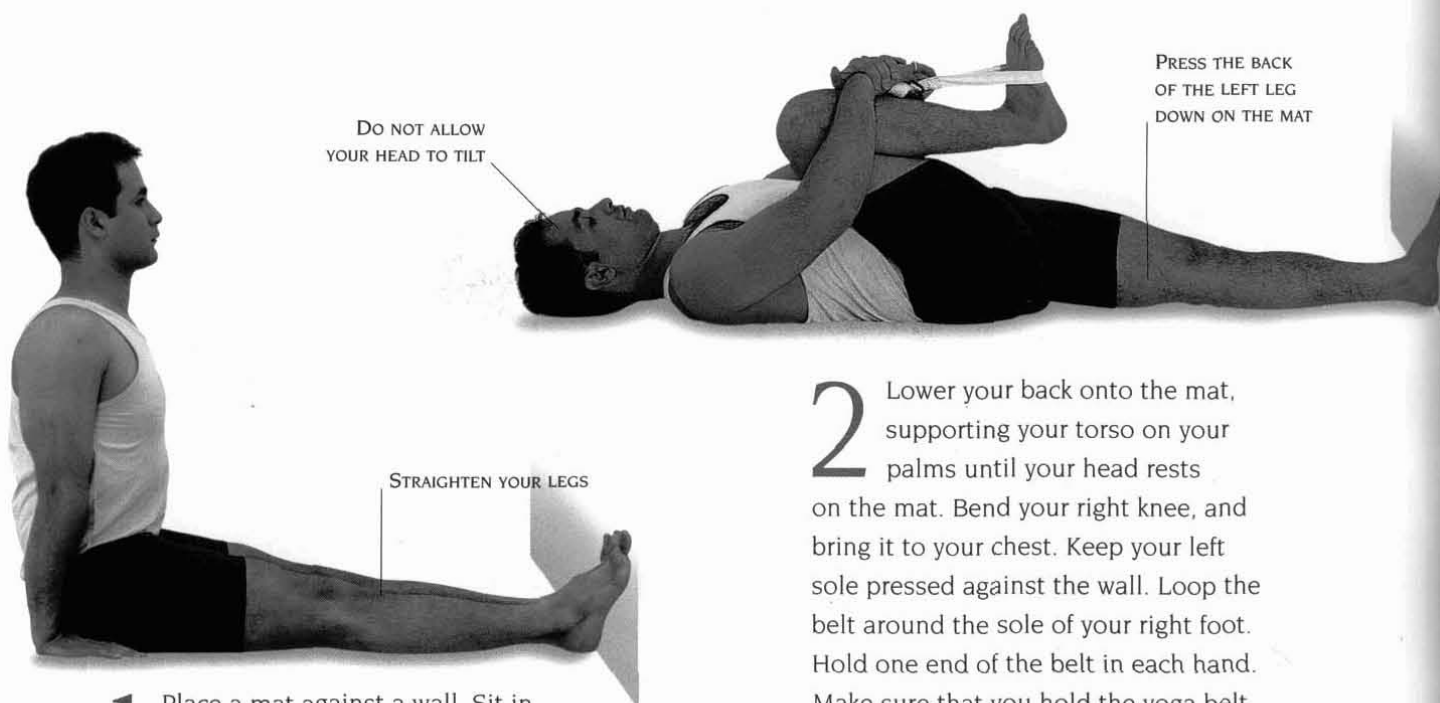
IN SANSKRIT, *supta* means "lying down", *pada* means "foot", and *angustha* is the big toe. These adapted poses work the whole foot, rather than just the toes. A yoga belt is placed around the sole of one foot, and the resultant stretch to the legs increases flexibility in the pelvic area and improves blood circulation in the legs. It also makes the muscles of the legs stronger.

PROPS (See page 164) A MAT, A WALL, AND A YOGA BELT. The wall steadies the outstretched foot, preventing it from tilting. It also ensures that the body is

correctly aligned. The yoga belt, looped around the sole of the raised foot, makes the asana easier for those who are stiff in the hips and pelvic area.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana if you are recovering from a cardiac condition, or if you have blocked arteries, asthma, bronchitis, migraine, stress-related headaches, eye strain, or diarrhoea. If you have high blood pressure, place a folded blanket under your head and neck.



1 Place a mat against a wall. Sit in Dandasana (see page 82) facing the wall. Keep a yoga belt beside you. The soles of your feet should touch the wall comfortably, with your toes pointing upward. Press both your palms down on the mat.

2 Lower your back onto the mat, supporting your torso on your palms until your head rests on the mat. Bend your right knee, and bring it to your chest. Keep your left sole pressed against the wall. Loop the belt around the sole of your right foot. Hold one end of the belt in each hand. Make sure that you hold the yoga belt as close to your foot as possible. This opens your chest, and keeps your breathing regular and even. Keep your extended leg pressed down on the mat.

STRETCH THE
SOLE OF YOUR
RIGHT FOOT

RELAX YOUR
FACIAL MUSCLES
AND NECK

3 Inhale, and raise your right leg until it is perpendicular to the floor. Hold both ends of the belt with the right hand. Place your left arm beside your left hip. Press the left foot against the wall, and the left thigh on the mat. Stretch your right leg up further, simultaneously pulling your toes toward you with the belt. Feel the stretch in your right calf. Keep your left leg firmly pressed to the floor. Do not bend either knee or allow the left leg to tilt out. Initially, stay in this position for 20-30 seconds. With practice, increase the time to 1 minute. Repeat the pose on the other side.

EXTEND THE
HAMSTRING MUSCLES
OF BOTH LEGS

BENEFITS

◆ Removes stiffness in the lower back, and relieves backache, by helping to align the pelvic area

◆ Prevents hernia

◆ Helps to treat osteoarthritis of the hip and the knees by stretching the hamstrings and calf muscles, and strengthening the knees

◆ Strengthens the hip joint and tones the lower spine

◆ Relieves sciatic pain

◆ Helps to relieve menstrual discomfort such as cramps, heavy bleeding, or pain during menstruation



VARIATION 1 Foot on Block

PROPS (See page 164) A MAT, A WALL, A YOGA BELT, AND A WOODEN BLOCK. The block under the foot makes the pose easier for those who are stiff in the pelvic area.

SPECIFIC CAUTION You must keep your leg straight as you lower it onto the block. Allowing it to bend during this action might lead to injury.

GETTING INTO THE POSE Place the wooden block on your right. Follow Steps 1, 2, and 3 of the main asana. After you raise your right leg, exhale, then lower your leg to the right, keeping it absolutely straight. Place your right foot on the block. Pull on the belt and stretch your leg. Hold the pose for 20-30 seconds. Repeat the pose on the other side.

Supta Baddhakonasana

- Reclining fixed angle pose -



THE SANSKRIT WORD *supta* means “reclining”, *baddha* means “fixed”, while *kona* translates as “angle”.

This is a very restful asana that can be practised even by those who have had bypass surgery. It gently massages the heart and helps open blocked arteries.

The pose also improves blood circulation in the abdomen, massaging and toning the abdominal organs.

PROPS (See page 164) A BOLSTER, A BLANKET, A YOGA BELT, AND TWO WOODEN BLOCKS. The bolster supports the back and lifts the chest. The blanket supports the head, alleviating stress and

heaviness in the head and neck. The belt helps maintain the angle of the legs easily and holds the feet together. The wooden blocks support the thighs, reducing strain in the groin.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana if you have lower backache or poor bladder control. If you feel any strain while getting into the pose, use two bolsters instead of one. If you feel strain in the region of the groin, place a folded towel or blanket on both blocks placed below the knees.



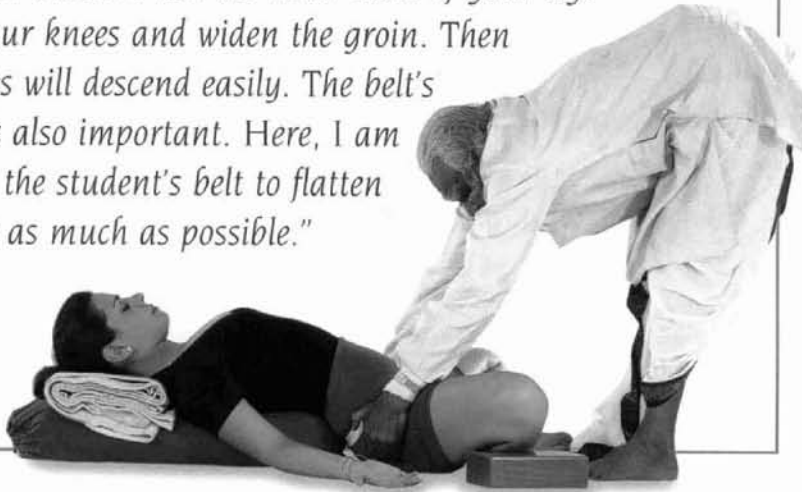
1 Sit in Dandasana (see page 82). Place a bolster behind you, its short end against your buttocks, and place a folded blanket on its far end. Place 2 wooden blocks on their broad sides on either side of your hips. Bend your knees, and join the soles of your feet together. Draw your heels toward your groin. Buckle the belt and loop it over your shoulders.



2 Bring the belt down to below your waist. Pass it under both feet to stretch it over your ankles and the insides of the thighs. Move your feet closer to your groin. The belt should feel neither too tight nor too slack, so adjust the buckle accordingly. Make sure that the end of the bolster touches your buttocks. Position a block under each thigh.

THE GURU'S ADVICE

"To bring your knees down to the floor, you must first widen the inside of your thighs to stretch the ligaments of the inner knees. Push the inner sides of your legs toward your knees and widen the groin. Then your knees will descend easily. The belt's position is also important. Here, I am adjusting the student's belt to flatten the thighs as much as possible."



BENEFITS

- ◆ Regulates blood pressure
- ◆ Prevents hernia as the hips and groin become more supple
- ◆ Relieves varicose veins and sciatica
- ◆ Reduces the pain caused by haemorrhoids
- ◆ Relieves indigestion and flatulence
- ◆ Tones the kidneys
- ◆ Improves blood circulation in the ovarian region, and is particularly beneficial during puberty and menopause
- ◆ Alleviates menstrual pain and leukorrhoea
- ◆ Corrects a prolapsed uterus

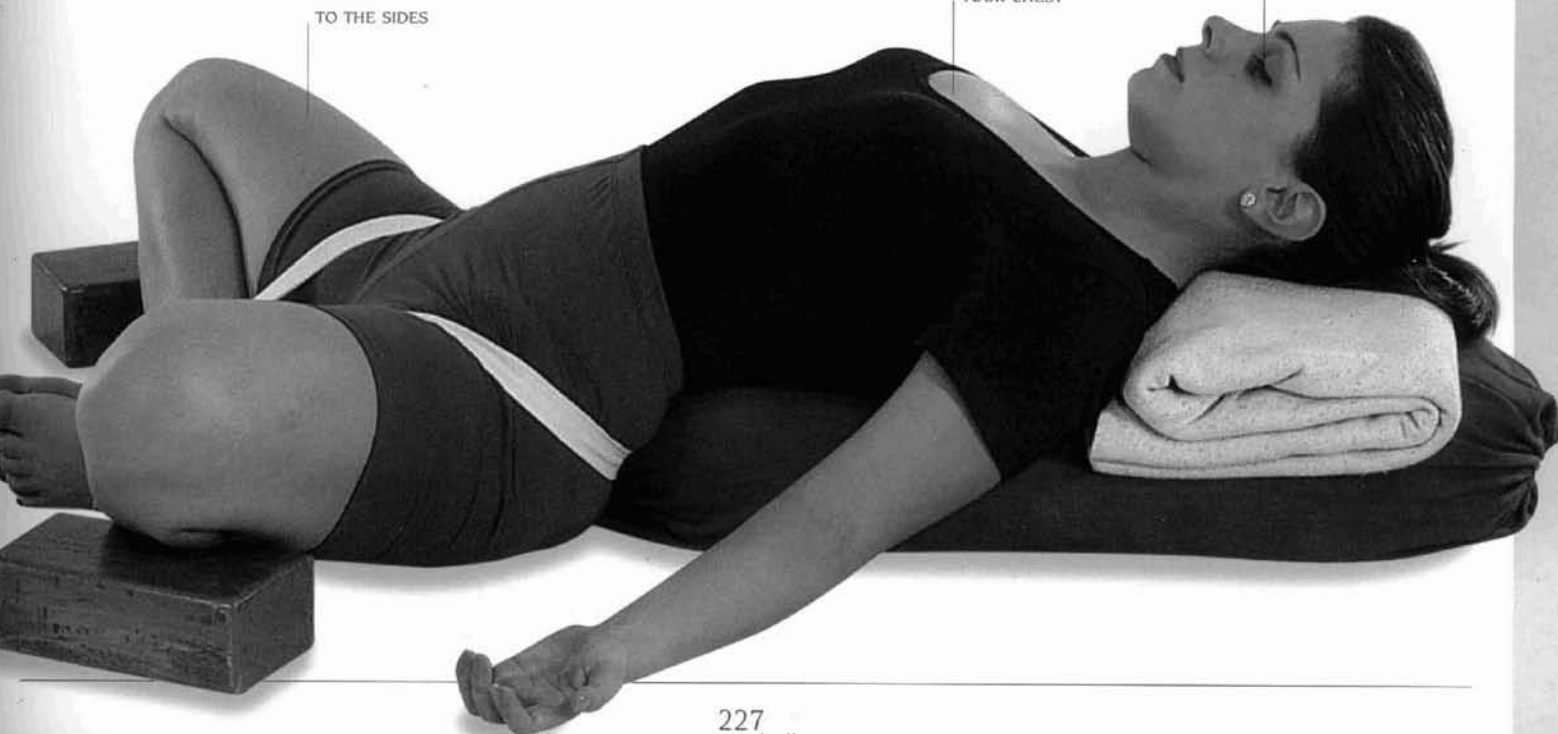
3 Place your elbows on the floor, and lower your head and back onto the bolster. Make sure that the bolster comfortably supports the length of your back and your head. Your spine should be on the centre of the bolster. Stretch your arms out to the

sides, with the palms facing the ceiling. Relax, and extend your groin out to the sides. Feel the expansion of the pelvis, and the release of tension in your ankles and knees. Initially, stay in the pose for 1 minute. With practice, increase the duration to 5-10 minutes.

STRETCH YOUR
THIGHS OUT
TO THE SIDES

OPEN AND LIFT
YOUR CHEST

KEEP YOUR
EYES PASSIVE



Supta Virasana

- Reclining hero pose -



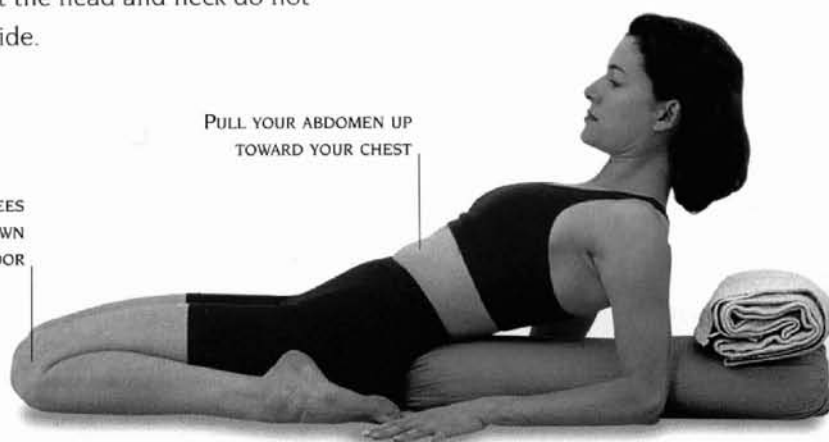
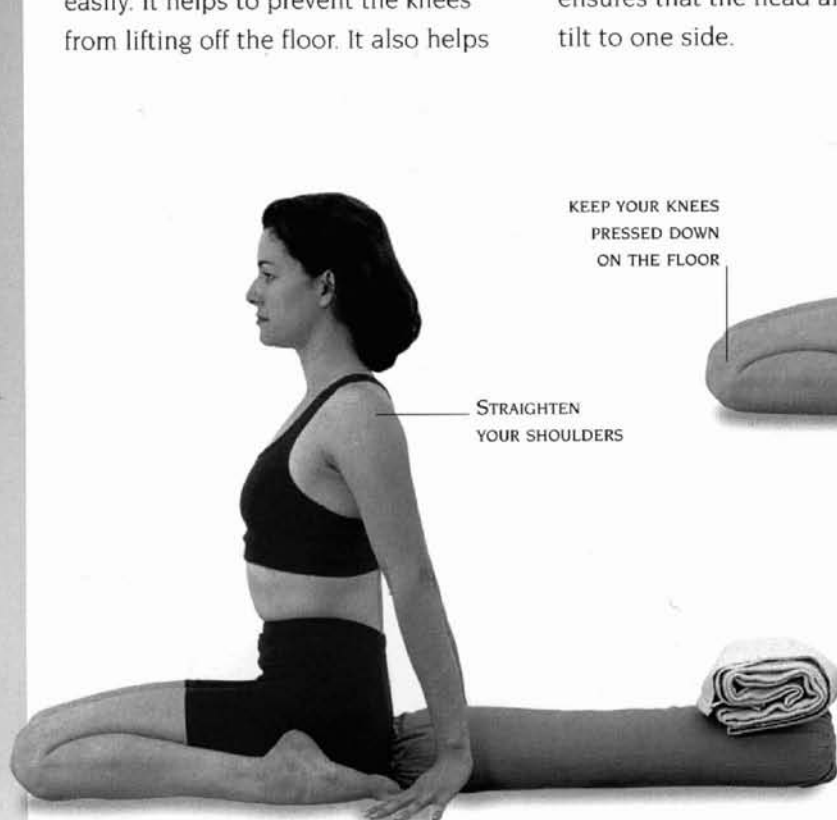
THIS ASANA IS A LESS strenuous version of the classic pose (see page 146). Practise the asana at the beginning of your yoga session, as it calms a restless and agitated mind, and induces the right mood for your practice. The pose reduces fatigue and stimulates the entire body. The chest expansion in the asana is particularly beneficial for the heart.

PROPS (See page 164) A BOLSTER AND A ROLLED BLANKET. The bolster helps people with stiff backs to practise easily. It helps to prevent the knees from lifting off the floor. It also helps

to maintain the lift of the chest and the stretch of the torso. The folded blanket under the head prevents eye strain, and ensures that the head and neck do not tilt to one side.

CAUTIONS

Do not practise this asana if you have lower backache. If you have angina or partially blocked arteries, or are recovering from bypass surgery, only practise the pose under expert supervision.



2 Press your palms on the floor, bend both elbows, and lean back toward the bolster. Place your elbows and forearms, one at a time, on the floor. Gradually lower your back onto the bolster. To avoid strain in the pelvic area or the thighs, ensure that your knees remain firmly on the floor.

1 Kneel in Virasana (see page 84) and place a bolster behind you, the short end touching your buttocks. Place a rolled blanket on the far end. Make sure that the inner sides of your feet touch your hips. Keep your back straight. Place your fingers on the floor beside your toes.

FEEL THE STRETCH
IN YOUR KNEES

KEEP YOUR THIGHS
CLOSE TOGETHER

DO NOT RAISE
YOUR SHOULDERS

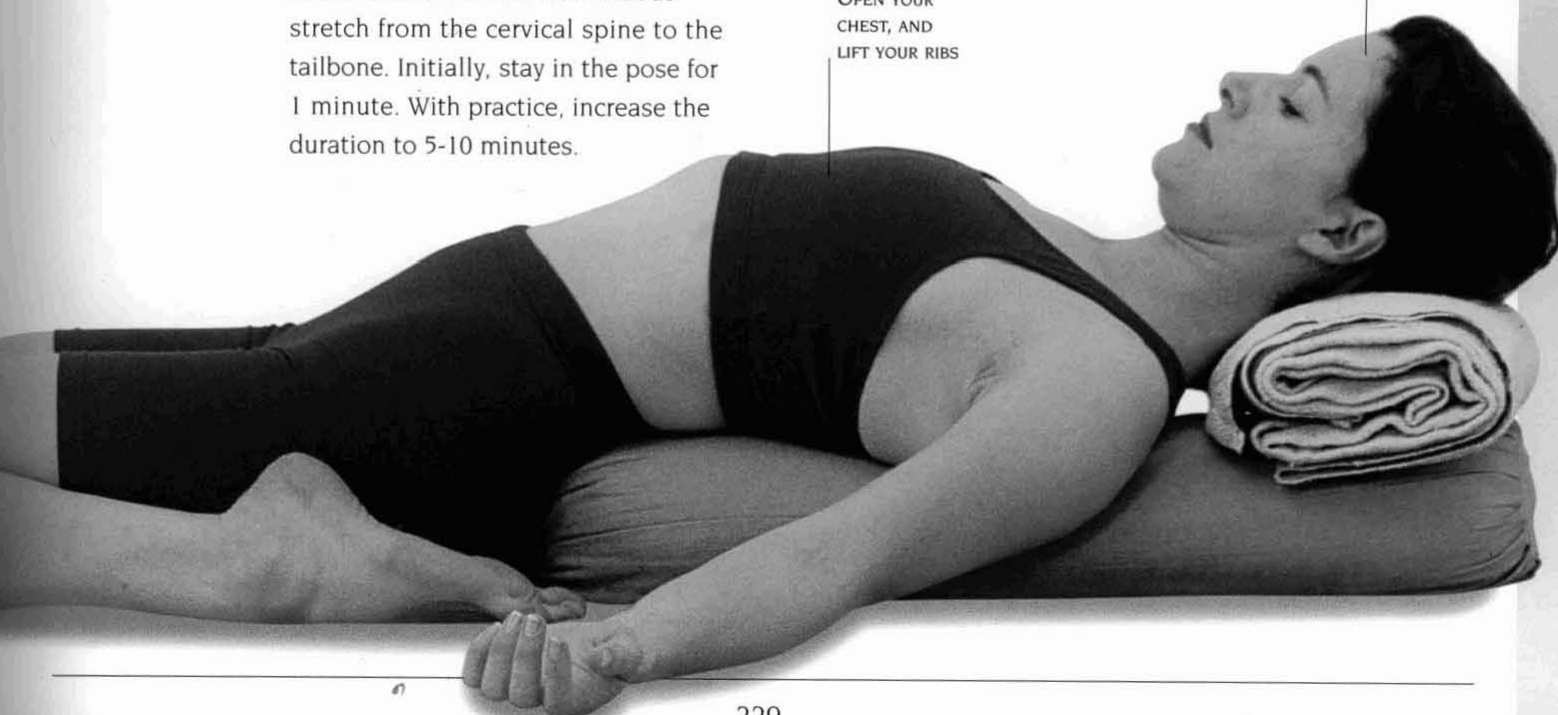


3 Once you lower your back onto the bolster, rest the back of your head on the rolled blanket. Keep your chest fully expanded. Press your shoulder blades down on the bolster to lift your chest. Extend your toes and ankles toward the bolster. Push your feet closer to your hips with your hands. Extend the pelvis, and press your thighs close together.

4 Move your arms out to the sides, with the palms facing upward. Extend your neck, but keep your throat relaxed. Drop your eyelids down gently. Experience the relaxation of the thighs and the abdomen, and the lift of the chest. Feel the continuous stretch from the cervical spine to the tailbone. Initially, stay in the pose for 1 minute. With practice, increase the duration to 5-10 minutes.

OPEN YOUR
CHEST, AND
LIFT YOUR RIBS

RELAX YOUR
FACIAL MUSCLES



BENEFITS

- ◆ Helps to prevent arterial blockages by gently massaging and strengthening the heart and increasing coronary blood flow
- ◆ Increases the elasticity of lung tissue
- ◆ Enhances resistance to infections
- ◆ Relieves indigestion, acidity, and flatulence
- ◆ Corrects a prolapsed uterus, and tones the pelvic organs
- ◆ Reduces inflammation in the knees, and relieves gout and rheumatic pain
- ◆ Relieves pain in the legs and feet and rests them, alleviating the effects of long hours of standing
- ◆ Helps to correct flat feet

Ujjayi Pranayama

- Conquest of energy -



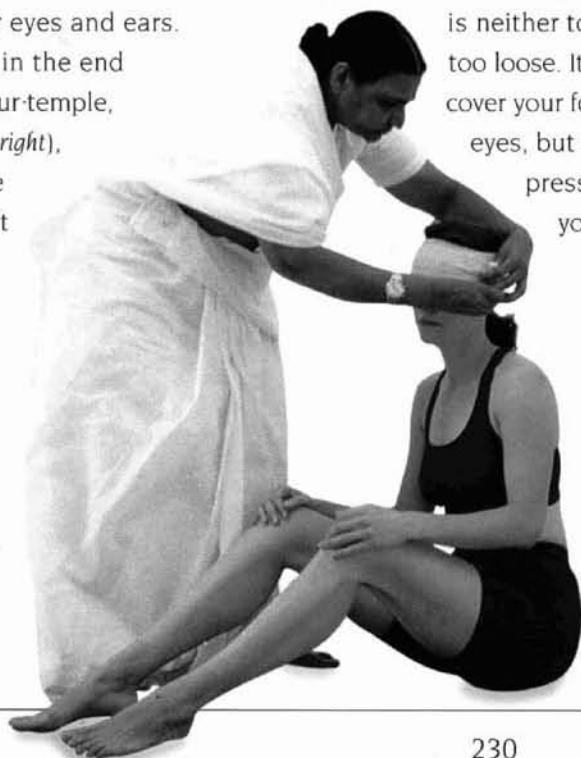
THIS IS THE BASIC FORM OF pranayama (see page 32). *Ud* means "expand" in Sanskrit, *jaya* means "conquest", *prana* means "life-force", and *ayama* is the "distribution" of that force or energy. Pranayama is not just cycles of inhalation and exhalation, nor is it merely deep breathing. The practice of pranayama goes beyond these to link our physiological and spiritual dimensions. There are four stages to this pranayama. Attempt each stage sequentially, one at a time.

PROPS (see page 164) TWO FOAM BLOCKS, TWO WOODEN BLOCKS, A ROLLED BLANKET, A CREPE BANDAGE, AND A MAT. The blanket and the two wooden blocks raise the head above the level of the chest, freeing and expanding the diaphragm. They also support the middle back and

ribs and help stretch the intercostal muscles. The foam blocks lift the chest and keep the abdominal muscles soft. The rolled blanket helps to relax the head and brain, stopping the flow of thought. The crepe bandage helps to focus the mind and turn it inward.

PREPARATION Hold one end of the bandage just above your ear, and wrap it around your forehead 3 times, winding it over your eyes and ears. Make sure you tuck in the end of the bandage at your temple, as Geeta Iyengar (see right), demonstrates on the student. If you tuck it

in at the back of the head, you will not be able to rest your head evenly on the blanket. Ensure that the bandage is neither too tight nor too loose. It should cover your forehead and eyes, but should not press down on your nose.



CAUTIONS

This is not recommended for beginners. Intermediate students must practise with props. Never swallow your saliva during or between inhalation and exhalation. Swallow after a complete exhalation. Do not practise if you have severe backache or constipation. Do not practise this pranayama if you are feeling tired, as exertion can be harmful for the lungs and the heart. Do not practise strenuous yoga asanas after pranayama. Before pranayama, practise a few reclining asanas to expand the abdominal cavity and the diaphragm.

1 Spread a mat on the floor. Place 2 foam blocks about 30cm (1ft) from the mat's edge, the top one protruding over the right end of the lower one (see inset). Place the wooden blocks on their long sides, one parallel to the foam blocks, and the other at right angles to the first. Place a rolled blanket on the second wooden block.

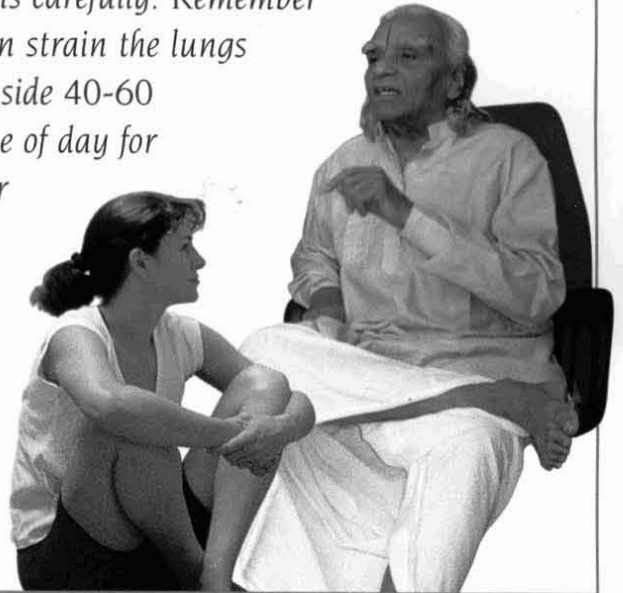


ALLOW YOUR
FEET TO
TILT OUTWARD

2 Sit in Dandasana (see page 82) and put on the bandage. Place your elbows and forearms on the mat and lower your back onto the foam blocks. There should be a slight gap between your buttocks and the blocks, as Geeta Iyengar demonstrates to the student (see below). Place your shoulders on the first wooden block, and push your lower shoulder blades into your chest, away from your spine and not toward your ears. This helps to broaden your thoracic cavity, allowing you to inhale deeply. Rest the back of your head comfortably on the rolled blanket, but do not allow it to tilt back. Relax your jaws, and rest your tongue on your lower jaw, as this helps to prevent the accumulation of saliva.

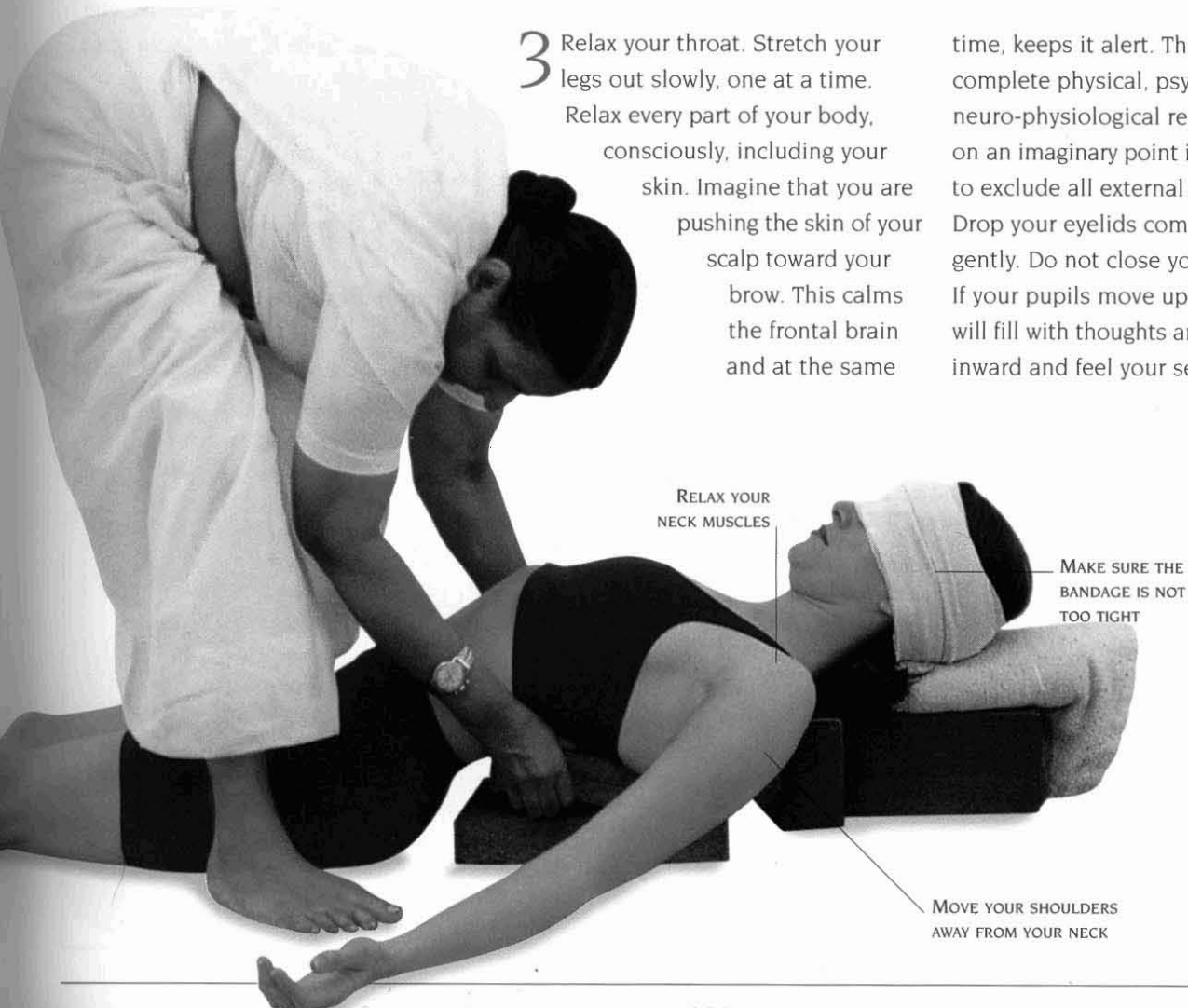
THE GURU'S ADVICE

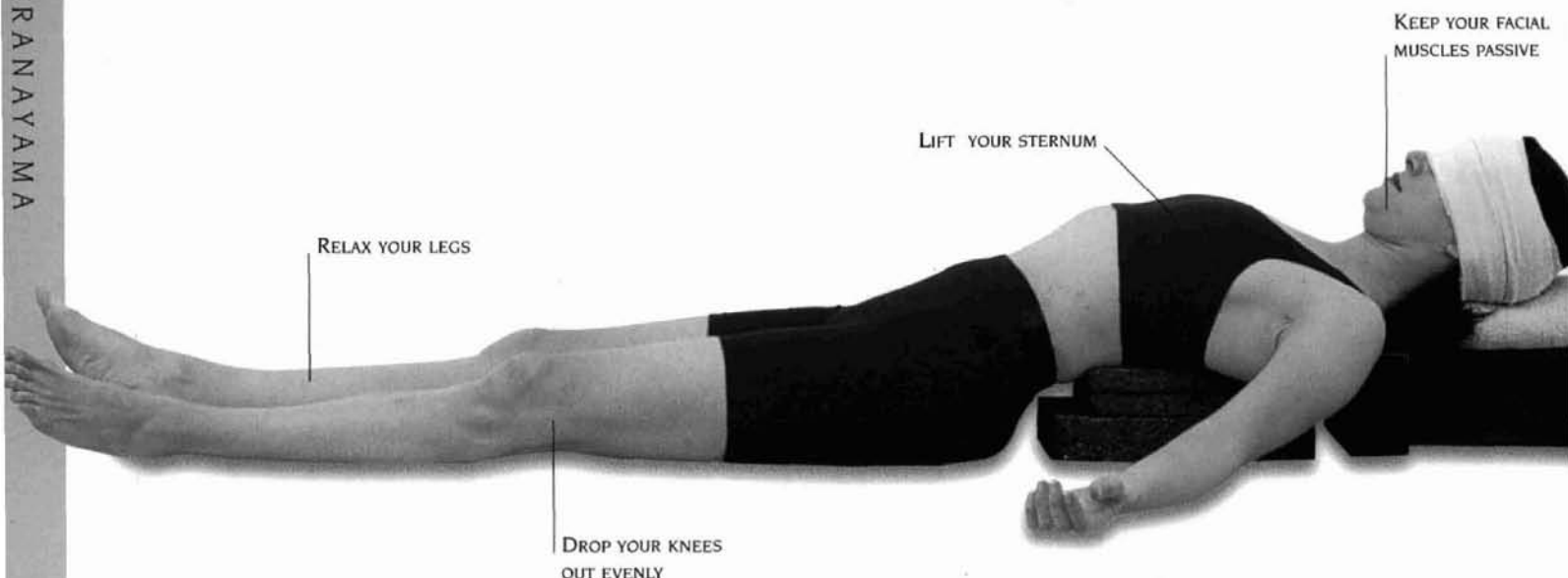
"Follow the instructions carefully. Remember that faulty practice can strain the lungs and diaphragm. Set aside 40-60 minutes at a fixed time of day for the pranayama. Never practise just after a meal, or immediately after an energetic session of asanas."



3 Relax your throat. Stretch your legs out slowly, one at a time. Relax every part of your body, consciously, including your skin. Imagine that you are pushing the skin of your scalp toward your brow. This calms the frontal brain and at the same

time, keeps it alert. This is the key to complete physical, psychological, and neuro-physiological relaxation. Focus on an imaginary point inside your chest to exclude all external disturbances. Drop your eyelids completely, but gently. Do not close your eyes tightly. If your pupils move upward, your mind will fill with thoughts and tension. Look inward and feel your senses withdraw.





STAGES Attempt the four stages in sequence. Each cycle of breath begins with an inhalation and ends with an exhalation, both of equal duration. Do not worry about the duration or retention of your breath; with practice, it will become steady, resonant, and rhythmic. Beginners should not attempt more than the advised cycles of the pranayama. Always stop before reaching the limit of your endurance. Practise each stage for 5-8 minutes.

1 This is a preparatory stage and consists of normal inhalation and exhalation. Breathe naturally, but consciously. When you breathe in, expand your chest fully but do not tense your diaphragm. Be conscious of your breathing, but do not breathe deeply. Practise 10 cycles.

2 This stage involves normal inhalation and deep exhalation. Inhale, then exhale slowly, deeply, and steadily, releasing all the air in your lungs. Keep your sternum lifted. Synchronize the movements of your diaphragm and abdomen, keeping the flow of breath smooth and uniform. Practise 15 cycles.

3 This stage involves deep inhalation and normal exhalation. Exhale without strain, then inhale slowly and deeply. Feel your breath move up from the pelvis to the pit of the throat, and then spread to each side of your torso. Practise 15-20 cycles.

4 The final stage consists of deep inhalation and deep exhalation. Exhale, emptying your lungs without strain. Then, inhale slowly, deeply, and smoothly. Exhale silently, until the lungs feel completely empty. Practise 15-20 cycles. End the pranayama with an exhalation.

BENEFITS

- ◆
*Relieves depression and
boosts confidence*
- ◆
Alleviates cardiac disorders
- ◆
Normalizes blood pressure
- ◆
Relieves asthma
- ◆
Invigorates the nervous system

COMING OUT OF THE POSE

◆
Roll gently off the foam blocks onto your right side. Sit up slowly and move the blocks away. Now lie down in Savasana (see page 150), with a blanket under your head and neck. Remain in the pose for 5 minutes, breathing normally. Then turn onto your right side again. Place your left hand on the right hand. Pause, then supporting yourself on your left hand, sit up slowly, and sit cross-legged. Remove the bandage and open your eyes gently. Rest for a few moments.

Viloma 2 Pranayama

- Interrupted breathing cycle -



THIS PRANAYAMA IS PRACTISED in three stages and each stage can require 3-4 weeks to perfect. Each stage is more subtle than the preceding one, and requires a greater level of awareness. *Viloma* means "against the natural course" in Sanskrit, because in this pranayama you have to hold your breath for two seconds during each breathing cycle.

PROPS (see page 164) TWO FOAM BLOCKS, TWO WOODEN BLOCKS, A CREPE BANDAGE, AND A MAT. The foam blocks support the back, lift the chest, and keep the abdominal muscles relaxed. The two wooden

blocks lift the head above the chest, expanding the diaphragm, middle back, and ribs, helping to stretch stiff intercostal muscles. The bandage helps to turn the mind inward.

BENEFITS

- ◆ Brings lightness to the body and serenity to the mind
- ◆ Regulates blood pressure
- ◆ Reduces eye strain and headaches
- ◆ Relieves symptoms of colds, coughs, and tonsillitis
- ◆ Helps to treat menorrhagia and metrorrhagia
- ◆ Reduces mood-swings and PMS-related headaches
- ◆ Helps to treat the symptoms of menopause

GETTING INTO THE POSE Place the foam and wooden blocks as in Ujjayi Pranayama (see page 230). Follow the steps for Savasana (see page 234). Then practise a few cycles of Ujjayi Pranayama. This will open your chest and stimulate your intercostal muscles.

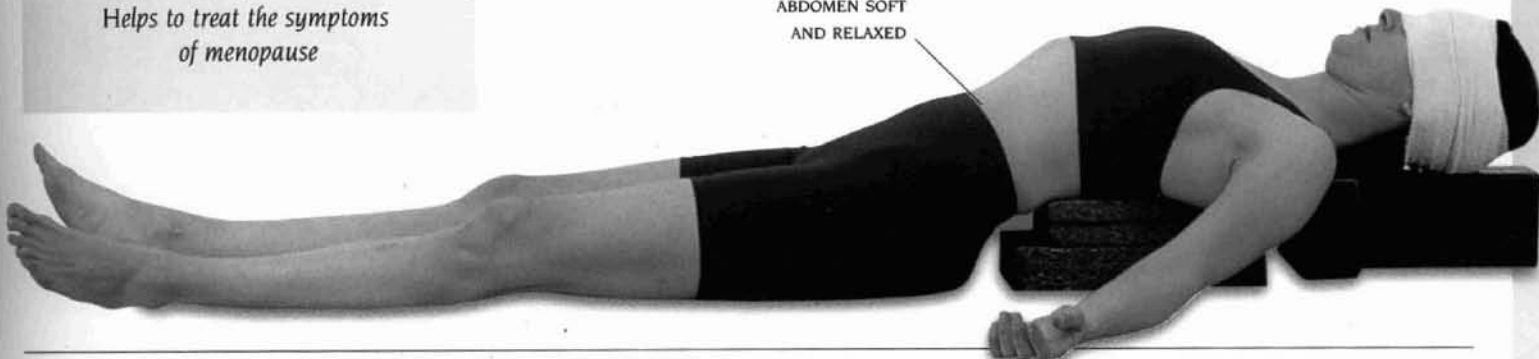
1 Keep your sternum lifted and your diaphragm firm. Inhale and exhale without strain, slowly and deeply. Your exhalation should last for 2-3 seconds. Then, pause for 2 seconds before inhaling. This constitutes a single cycle. Repeat this 3-5 times.

2 Your breathing should now fade away effortlessly at each pause and resume equally easily. Follow the instructions for Stage 1, with your exhalations longer than your pauses. Practise 15-20 cycles over 7-10 minutes. Rest in Savasana.

3 Do a few cycles of Steps 1 and 2. Focus on the silence of the pauses. Experience a feeling of serenity.

COMING OUT OF THE POSE Practise a cycle of Ujjayi Pranayama (see page 230). Then follow the coming out of the pose sequence for Savasana (see page 235).

KEEP YOUR
ABDOMEN SOFT
AND RELAXED



Savasana

- Corpse pose -



IN THIS VERSION OF the classic asana (see page 150), subtle adjustments in the final pose are made easier with the help of props. The stillness in the pose is not meditation, but reflects a mastery of the inner self and a surrender to a higher, sublime consciousness. The steady, smooth breathing in the pose allows energy to flow into the body, invigorating it, and reducing the stress of everyday life.

PROPS (see page 164) A FOLDED BLANKET, A BOLSTER, A CREPE BANDAGE, AND A MAT. The bolster supports the back and raises the diaphragm and chest. The folded blanket lifts the head and neck, soothing and clearing the mind. If you have a cold,

cough, or asthma, keeping your head and chest raised in this pose, helps you to breathe comfortably. The bandage shields the eyes from light. It also soothes the eyes, ears, and brain by softening and relaxing the facial skin, muscles, and ligaments.

CAUTIONS

This asana is usually practised at the end of a yoga session. Do not practise it more than once in a single session. Beginners should practise Savasana without props for 5 weeks before attempting this version, and should hold the pose for 5 minutes. For the first 10 weeks of practice with props, wrap the bandage round your forehead, but not your eyes. If at any time you experience feelings of isolation, anxiety, fear, or depression when your eyes are covered, practise without the bandage.

EXTEND YOUR SPINE

STRETCH OUT
YOUR LEGS

REST YOUR HEAD
EVENLY ON
THE BLANKET

1 Spread the mat on the floor. Place a bolster on the mat, with its long sides parallel to the long sides of the mat. Sit in Dandasana (see page 82) with the short end of the bolster



against your buttocks, and place the folded blanket on the far end.

If you have osteoarthritis of the knees or if your legs are feeling tired, place a bolster under your knees (see inset).

2 Wrap the bandage around your forehead, following the instructions for Ujjayi Pranayama (see page 230). Now place your elbows and forearms on the mat. Lower your back, vertebra by vertebra, onto the bolster until your head rests comfortably on the folded blanket. Position your buttocks evenly on the centre of the mat. Spread out your arms to the sides, palms facing up, and rest them on the floor.



BENEFITS

◆
Removes physical and mental fatigue

◆
Relaxes and soothes the sympathetic nervous system

◆
Helps to treat high blood pressure, and relieves migraine and stress-related headaches

◆
Alleviates the symptoms of respiratory diseases and eases breathing

◆
Speeds recuperation after an illness

◆
Helps toward refreshing, dreamless sleep, especially for those with sleep disorders

COMING OUT OF THE POSE



I When you come out of the pose, do not tense your neck and throat. Bring your arms to your sides and bring your legs together. Gently roll off the bolster onto your right side, and place your right palm under your head. Keep your knees slightly bent. Pause and rest for a few moments. Allow your body and mind to determine when you should sit up.



II When you feel ready, push yourself into a sitting position with your left hand. Sit cross-legged and unwrap the bandage gently. Do not take it off when you are lying down, as this can strain the facial and cranial nerves. Open your eyes slowly. If you open them too abruptly, your vision may blur. Straighten your legs and sit in Dandasana.

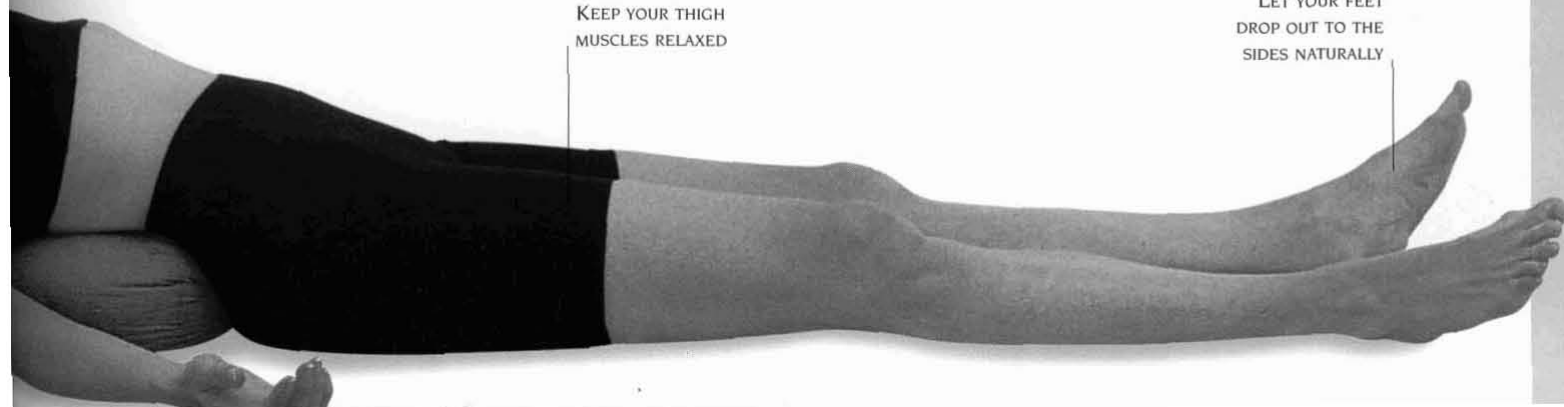
3 Straighten your legs and stretch them evenly away from each other, without disturbing the extension of your waist. Exhale, focusing on your breathing, then lift and stretch your diaphragm, keeping it free of tension. Keep your arms at a comfortable distance from your body. If they are placed too near or too far away, your shoulders will lift off the bolster.

Stretch your shoulders away from your neck. The centre of your back should be on the centre of the bolster. Keep your abdomen soft and relaxed. Expand your chest and relax your throat, until you feel a soothing sensation in the neck. Ensure that your head does not tilt back. Relax your facial muscles and your jaw. Do not clench your teeth.

4 Keep your breathing smooth and free of tension, but do not breathe deeply. Let your eyeballs relax into their sockets, and allow external surroundings to recede. Feel the energy flow from your brain to your body as the physical, physiological, mental, intellectual, and spiritual planes come together. Stay in the pose for 5-10 minutes.

KEEP YOUR THIGH
MUSCLES RELAXED

LET YOUR FEET
DROP OUT TO THE
SIDES NATURALLY







“Yoga is the golden key which unlocks the door to peace, tranquillity, and joy.”

Yoga for Ailments

Yoga can heal parts of our bodies that have been injured, traumatized, or simply ignored and neglected. Medical treatment can accelerate the healing process but, all too often, cannot tackle the source of the problem. The ancient yogis realized that the cure for diseases lay within ourselves. They formulated a therapy which worked on our very natures, to enable the systems of the body to function as effectively and efficiently as possible, both preventing and curing disease. Yoga asanas involve movements that stimulate injured parts of the body by increasing the blood supply to them. The practice of asanas also increases our ability to bear pain.

Yoga Therapy

Yoga's system of healing is based on the premise that the body should be allowed to function as naturally as possible. Practising the recommended asanas will first rejuvenate your body, and then tackle the causes of the ailment.

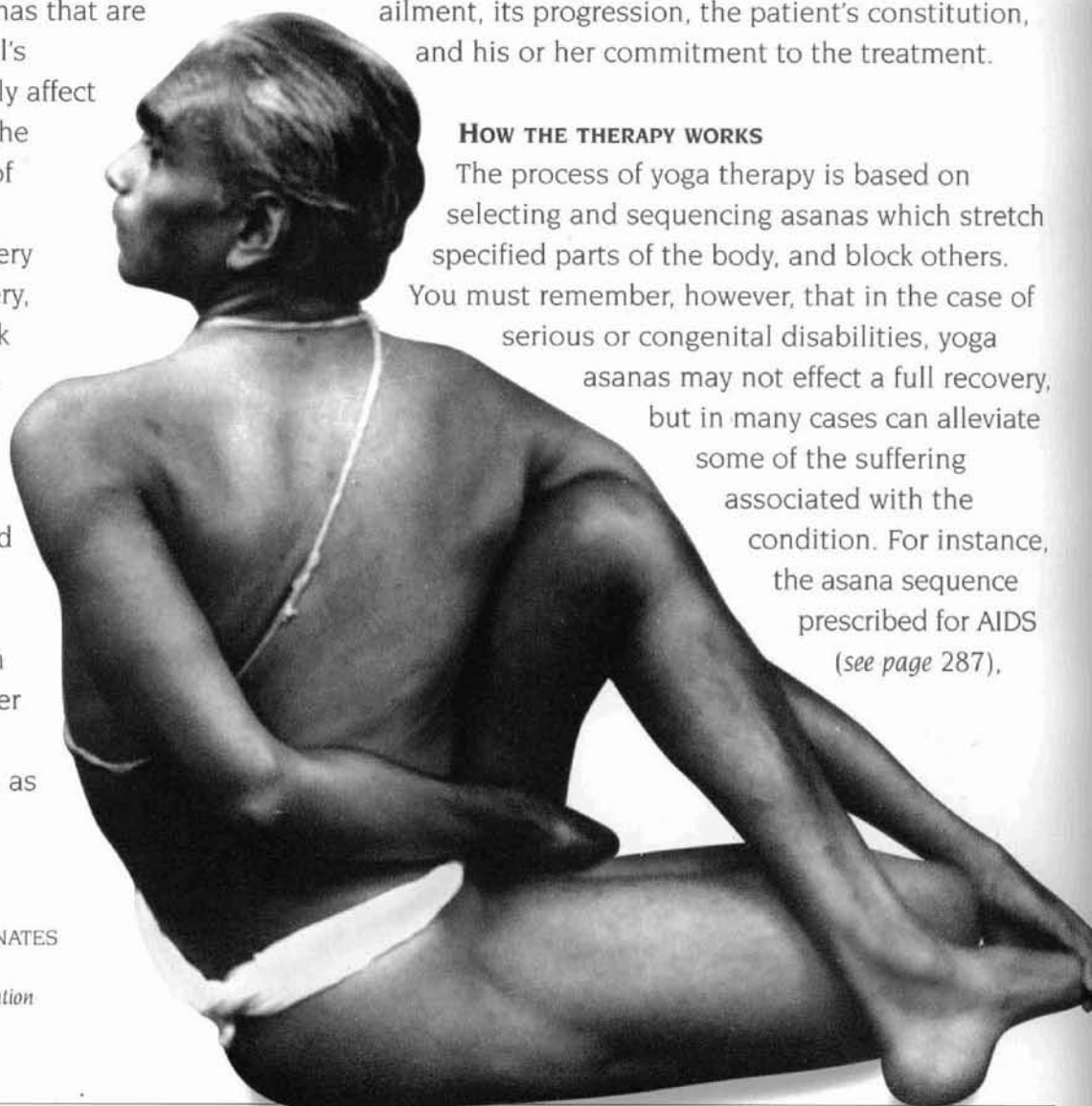
The four pillars of yoga therapy are the physician, the medication, the attendant, and the patient. In the yogic worldview, the sage Patanjali is the physician, asanas are the medication, the yoga instructor is the attendant, and the student is the patient. Asanas are recommended to "patients" according to their ailment and their physical and emotional condition. This has to be done with care. If a doctor's diagnosis is wrong or the dosage is inappropriate, the treatment can actually harm the patient. Similarly, asanas that are not suited to an individual's requirements can adversely affect his or her health. Follow the recommended sequence of asanas carefully.

The human body is a very complex piece of machinery, a finely connected network of muscles, joints, nerves, veins, arteries, and capillaries. It is a hard task to keep all these elements co-ordinated and in good working order under the best of circumstances. More often than not, ailments, whether minor or major, affect the body. The science of yoga, as

well as that of Ayurveda (a traditional Indian system of healing based on herbal remedies), classify ailments that afflict the body and the mind under three basic categories. These are, firstly, self-inflicted ailments, caused by neglect or abuse of the body; secondly, congenital ailments, present from birth; and thirdly, ailments caused by the imbalance of any of the five elements of ether, air, fire, water, and earth, in our system. Yoga can treat all three, but the pace and effectiveness of the cure depends on the type of ailment, its progression, the patient's constitution, and his or her commitment to the treatment.

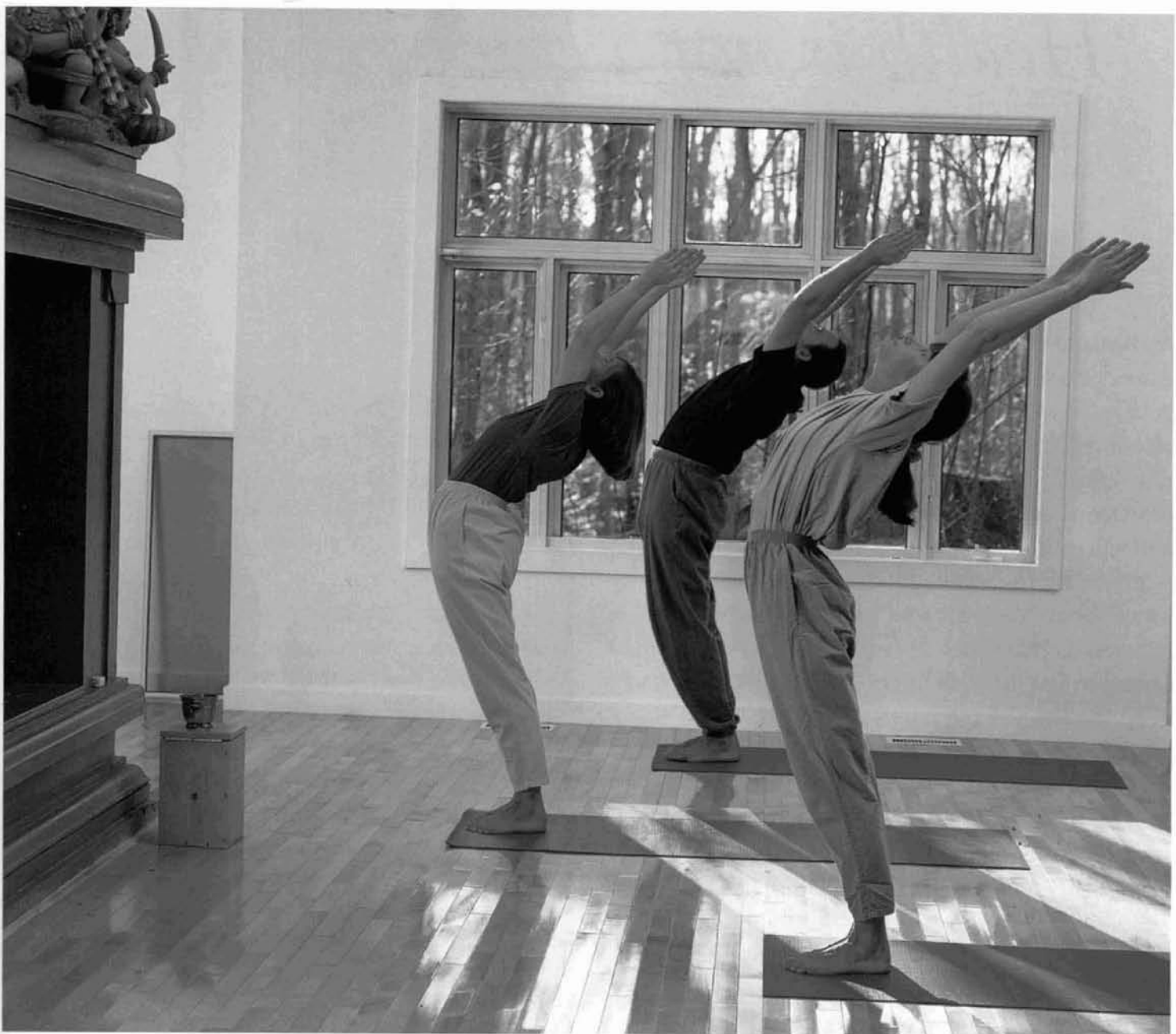
HOW THE THERAPY WORKS

The process of yoga therapy is based on selecting and sequencing asanas which stretch specified parts of the body, and block others. You must remember, however, that in the case of serious or congenital disabilities, yoga asanas may not effect a full recovery, but in many cases can alleviate some of the suffering associated with the condition. For instance, the asana sequence prescribed for AIDS (see page 287),



YOGA THERAPY REJUVENATES THE BODY

Yogacharya Iyengar in a variation of Marichyasana



PRACTISING STEADILY AND WITH PERSISTENCE

Yoga therapy involves stretching certain parts of the body and relaxing others

may relieve some of the symptoms, and the relief can boost morale and self-confidence.

Another benefit of yoga therapy is that it has been known to raise the threshold of pain and endurance. This only happens, however, if the recommended asanas are practised with patience and dedication. Yoga calms the brain and soothes the nerves, reducing the apprehension of pain, which is, in many cases, as damaging as pain itself.

Medication accelerates the healing process, but is not a cure in itself. Nature alone is the ultimate

cure. The belief underlying yoga therapy is to enable the human system to function as efficiently, effectively, and naturally as it can. This natural process, however, operates at its own rhythm and pace, and the pace may sometimes be slow.

Yoga therapy begins with understanding the entire human body and the way it functions. The origins and development of the ailment in question are carefully studied, particularly the parts of the body most affected. The aim is not simply to cure the specific symptom, but to target the cause.

“Health is not a commodity to be bargained for. It has to be earned through sweat.”

ASANAS AND HEALTH

Asanas make your body supple, bringing alertness to your mind, while soothing your nerves and glands, relaxing your brain, and maintaining a physical, physiological, and emotional balance. Regular practice of asanas improves your self-confidence and will power. The practice of asanas lubricates joints, and increases mobility, bringing about an awareness of each muscle, joint, and organ. Different combinations of asanas improve the range of movement for each muscle and joint, helping to align the left and the right sides of the body.

HOW ASANAS HEAL YOU

Asanas are based on the simple principles of stretching, bending, rotating, and relaxing. These movements have diverse effects on the body's

systems, and will either heal, stimulate, or seal off specific parts of the body. At the same time, the approach is holistic, aimed at purifying and strengthening each organ, bone, and cell of the body. Yoga is a combination of physiotherapy, psychotherapy, and spiritual therapy, a healing science which does not distinguish between the physical and physiological bodies. Asanas are bio-physio-psychological poses, through which we build up many “dams” inside our body. Blood and energy are brought to these “dams”, which then open very gradually, allowing the organs to absorb fresh healing blood and energy. When a part of the body is affected by disease, it loses its sensitivity. During the practice of specifically therapeutic asanas, energy from these “dams” flows uninterruptedly to the affected area, allowing the healing process to begin.

RANGE OF MOVEMENTS

Viparita Dandasana relieves stiff back muscles



It is important to work gradually from the periphery to the affected area. First, the peripheral parts of the body should be toned, strengthened, and put into good working order. Only then can the ailment be tackled. Sometimes, however, in the case of a fresh problem, the affected part should be worked upon directly, before it degenerates further.

THE BRAIN AND THE BODY

A very important aspect of yoga therapy is that it teaches us to control the effect of the brain upon the body. The term "brain" is used here in the broadest sense, covering the mind and intellect, and including thought, experience, and imagination. Energy from the brain is diffused to various parts of the body in the form of vital, healing energy. Practising yoga teaches the brain to be calm and passive, to accept and subdue pain, not fight it. The energy that is otherwise dissipated in coping with stress and pain, is diverted to healing.

Ultimately, the aim of yoga therapy is to teach the brain and body to work in harmony. Specific asanas work on the various systems of the body, whether respiratory, circulatory, digestive, hormonal, immune, or reproductive. Therefore, the combination and sequencing of the asanas must be followed for the healing process to be effective. Follow the sequence prescribed for your particular ailment, setting up a schedule for practising the recommended asanas (*see page 386*). Do not get discouraged if the healing of your ailment takes time. Remember, perseverance is the essence of yoga.

Heart & Circulation



THE HEART IS THE ORGAN that pumps blood to all parts of the body. It is located in the thoracic cavity, nestled between the lungs. The circulatory system, composed of arteries, veins, and capillaries, carries blood to and from the heart to the entire body, supplying oxygen and nutrients, and carrying away waste products. The following sequences of asanas address some common disorders of this system.

Cold extremities

This is caused by a slowdown in circulation, when blood collects in the torso and fails to correctly reach the extremities. It gives rise to ailments of the chest and of the intestinal and abdominal organs. It is often the result of a sluggish thyroid, stress, or nervousness.



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*“Never perform asanas mechanically.
If you do, your body stagnates.”*



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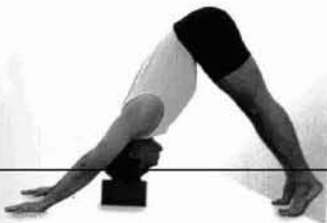
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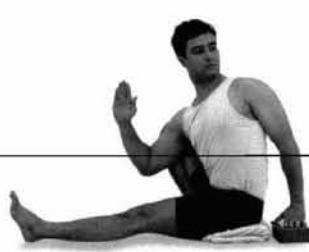
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Varicose veins

In this condition, veins just beneath the skin of the legs are elongated and dilated, leading to aching legs, fatigue, and muscle cramps. The condition often occurs during pregnancy and menstruation, and also affects those who have to stay on their feet for long periods.



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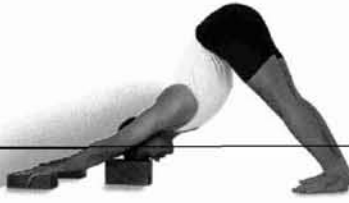
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High blood pressure

This condition is defined as sustained, elevated blood pressure, and is also known as hypertension. It has many causes, which include psychological, physiological, and environmental factors.



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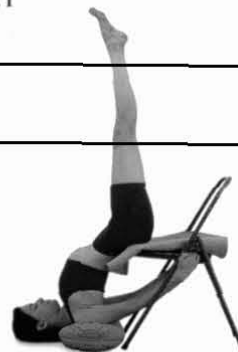
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Low blood pressure

This condition, also called hypotension, occurs when blood pressure is less than normally required to transport blood to all parts of the body. This can reduce blood supply to the brain, resulting in fatigue, fainting spells, light-headedness, blurred vision, or nausea.



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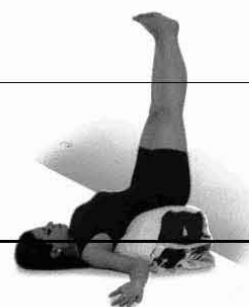
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Blocked arteries

This occurs when the coronary vessels are blocked, reducing blood flow to the cardiac muscles. This process eventually damages these muscles, and is a major cause of heart attacks. A common symptom is angina or chest pain (see page 250).



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Angina

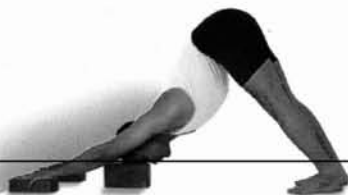
Angina pain characteristically radiates from the chest to the back, neck, and arms, and is accompanied by nausea, breathlessness, and fatigue. Its causes include smoking, obesity, blocked arteries (see page 249), hypertension, and excessive alcohol consumption.



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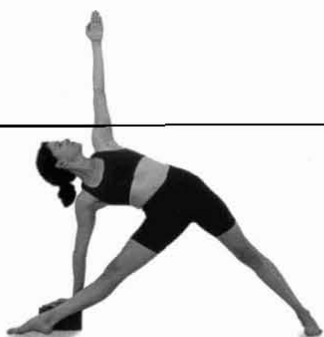
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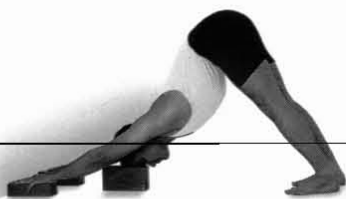
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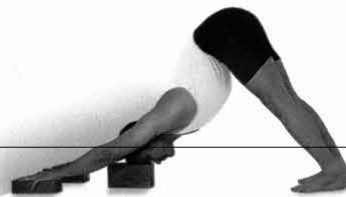
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Heart attack

Inadequate blood supply to the heart muscles results in myocardial infarction or a heart attack. It is often due to the gradual blocking of the coronary arteries (see page 250).



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Respiratory System



RESPIRATION STARTS FROM the upper respiratory tract in the nose and the pharynx (the throat). Then inhaled air passes through to the trachea (the wind-pipe), and the two major bronchi. These airways conduct air into the lungs. Carbon dioxide from the body's cells is exhaled through the lungs. Yoga asanas are particularly beneficial for all respiratory disorders if the recommended sequences are practised regularly.

Colds

These are minor viral infections of the mucous membranes that line the upper respiratory tract, including the nose and throat. The most common symptoms are nasal obstruction and discharge, sinusitis, sore throat, sneezing, coughing, and headaches.



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“As leaves move in the wind, your mind moves with your breath.”



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Breathlessness

This condition, also called dyspnoea, is caused by deficiencies in the elastic recoil of the lungs. Air is retained in the lungs, which then become distended. The diaphragm is squeezed and the effort to breathe strains the chest.



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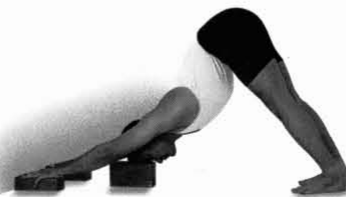
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Sinusitis

This condition is caused by the inflammation or swelling of mucous membranes lining the sinus cavities. Common symptoms include nasal congestion and discharge, headaches, and pain in the region of the upper jaw, eyes, cheeks, or ears.



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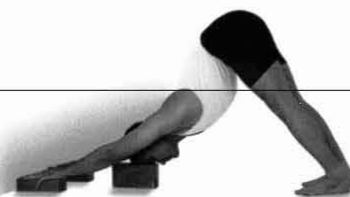
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Bronchitis

This condition is caused by inflammation or excess mucus in the bronchi, the airways connecting the lungs to the trachea or wind-pipe. The common symptoms of this condition are shortness of breath, wheezing, and coughing.



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Asthma

In this condition, the airways of the lungs are constricted, causing tightness in the chest, bouts of coughing, wheezing, and breathing difficulties. The inflammation of the air passages can become chronic. Asthma is usually caused by allergies or stress.



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*“Fear and fatigue block the mind.
Confront both squarely, and then
courage and confidence will
flow into you.”*

Digestive System

ALL THE FOOD WE EAT has to travel an average distance of almost 11m (35 feet) through the body. It passes through the mouth, gullet, small intestine, and large intestine. Food interacts with the saliva and with the secretions of the pancreas, gall bladder, and liver, and is broken down by digestive enzymes and acids. During this process, nourishment is absorbed by the body. Regular practice of these recommended asanas effectively alleviates digestive disorders.

Indigestion

This condition is associated with upper abdominal pain, discomfort, or distension which is either intermittent or chronic. Other indications are nausea, vomiting, belching, acidity, flatulence, and a constant feeling of being full.



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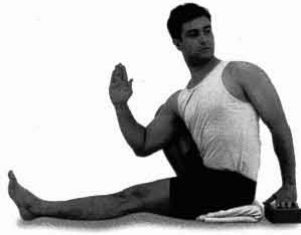
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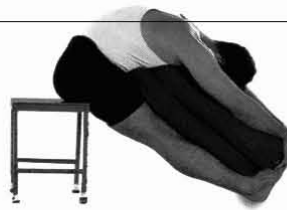
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Acidity

This is commonly indicated by a sharp, burning sensation in the lower chest, just below the sternum. It can be caused by overeating, the intake of highly-spiced or rich food, excessive alcohol, or drugs, such as aspirin or cortisone.



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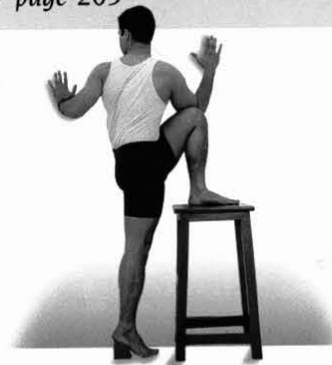
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Constipation

For some people, the elimination of waste from the body is difficult, infrequent, and sometimes painful. This is often accompanied by a feeling that the bowels have not been completely emptied.



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Diarrhoea

This condition is characterized by the sudden onset of frequent, watery stools, and is usually the symptom of an abdominal infection. It is associated with abdominal pain or distension, vomiting, fever, or chills.



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Irritable bowel syndrome

Characterized by a combination of abdominal pain and altered bowel function, this syndrome is due to a disturbance in the muscle movements of the large intestine. Some predisposing factors are a low-fibre diet, the use of laxatives, or stress.



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Duodenal ulcers

These are ulcers or raw areas in the duodenal bulb. A common symptom is a burning gastric pain 1-3 hours after a meal, relieved only by eating or by antacids. Other symptoms include weight loss, heartburn, vomiting, dizziness, and nausea.



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Gastric ulcers

These are raw areas in the gastro-intestinal tract, caused by the erosion of the stomach lining by acidic digestive juices. The usual symptom is abdominal pain when the stomach is empty.



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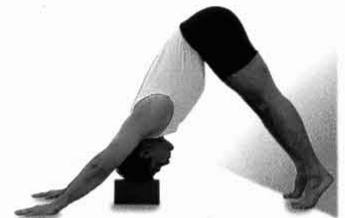
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Ulcerative colitis

This condition is caused by the inflammation of the colon and rectum. The common symptoms include diarrhoea with blood in the stools, abdominal pain or cramps, and rectal bleeding. Attacks can be frequent or can occur after long intervals.



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*“When stability becomes a habit,
maturity and clarity follow.”*

Urinary System



THIS SYSTEM COMPRISES THE kidneys, ureters, bladder, and the urethra. The kidneys manufacture urine, which consists of water and the waste products of metabolism, such as protein. Urine is excreted from the body, enabling the kidneys to maintain the body's electrolyte and acid base balance. The ureters transport urine to the bladder, while the urethra is the canal for the passage of urine to the exterior. Yoga asanas help to treat many common urinary disorders.

Incontinence

This is the involuntary loss of urine from the bladder. The condition becomes more common with age. The causes include weakening of the pelvic floor muscles, strokes, bladder irritation, and loss of control in the central nervous system.



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“Intensified action in yoga brings intensified intelligence.”



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Hormonal System



HORMONES ARE NATURAL CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES which control certain major functions of the body. Hormones are secreted by glands, which include the thyroid, parathyroid, pituitary, pineal, and adrenal glands, the testes and the ovaries, as well as the islets of Langerhans in the pancreas. Regular practice of the recommended asanas helps to ensure an effective secretion of hormones into the bloodstream.

Obesity

This is a condition of excess body fat that is 20 per cent greater than the individual's desired weight. Obesity is often caused by Cushing's syndrome, hypothalamic disorders, genetic factors, taking corticosteroid drugs, excess calorie intake, or lack of exercise.



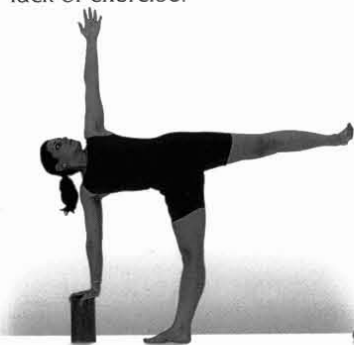
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“Yoga is a mirror, to look at ourselves from within.”



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Diabetes

This is the most common of all metabolic disorders. Its symptoms include frequent thirst and urination, excessive hunger, weight loss, and nausea. The condition is caused by insufficient insulin production in the pancreas.



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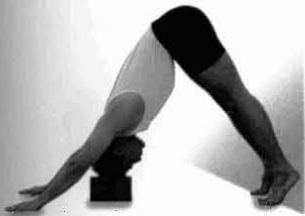
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Immune System



THE IMMUNE SYSTEM IS THE DEFENCE mechanism of the body and protects us from disease. Its main agent is the blood, a fluid consisting of plasma and red and white corpuscles or blood cells. It is the white corpuscles that inhibit the invasion of the bloodstream by micro-organisms. There are two types of immunity: natural and acquired. Yoga strengthens both, and regular practice of the recommended asanas can help to counter the disorders that affect them.

Low immune system

In this condition, the body's immunity is impaired, resulting in a wide spectrum of illnesses. The symptoms include weight loss, increased susceptibility to infections, fatigue, fevers, and malignant disorders.



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“Your whole body should be symmetrical. Yoga is symmetry.”



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AIDS

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, or AIDS, is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which attacks the immune system, and leaves the human body vulnerable to many life-threatening diseases. The following sequence of asanas may help alleviate some of the symptoms of the condition.



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“Yoga is for all of us. To limit boundaries is the denial of



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*yoga to national or cultural
universal consciousness.”*

Muscles, Bones, & Joints



THE HUMAN BODY IS COMPOSED of bone and muscle. The bones that make up the skeletal frame of the body are attached to each other by joints, which are held in place by strong ligaments and muscles. A muscle contracts or relaxes to move the bones connected to it. Better muscle function means a fitter, stronger body. Practising yoga strengthens the bones, improves co-ordination of the muscles, and provides a non-invasive way of treating ailments that affect both.

Physical fatigue

Stressful physical exertion brings on this condition, characterized by exhaustion and a reluctance to exert oneself. If unrelieved by rest, and the removal of stress factors, the condition may lead to chronic fatigue syndrome.



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*“Freedom with true discipline
is true freedom.”*



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Muscle cramps

These occur when a muscle in the limbs or abdomen contracts with great intensity and does not relax. These are often caused by exposure to heat. Cramps in the chest or arms, however, can indicate a heart attack and require immediate medical attention.



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Lower backache

The common causes of this condition are either stiffness in the ligaments or muscles of the lower back, or weak abdominal muscles. Poor posture and lack of exercise usually lead to tight and swollen back muscles, resulting in pain in this area.



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Middle backache

This is often caused by muscle strain, arthritis, or tears in the ligaments. The most common reason is herniated (or slipped) discs, which often recur. Herniated discs are usually the result of excess weight or incorrect posture.



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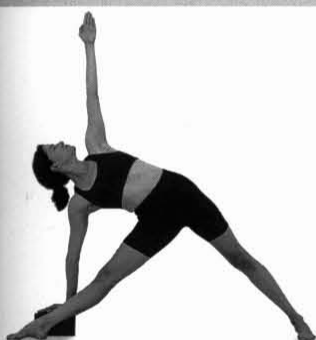
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Upper backache

Muscle deterioration and pain in the upper back may result from a sedentary lifestyle, excess weight, or a weakening of muscle tone. Other causes include the fusing of vertebrae or the inflammation of muscles and tendons.



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Cervical spondylosis

This is a degenerative disease of the spine caused by wear and tear on the joints between the cervical vertebrae. Also called cervical osteoarthritis, the symptoms include pain in the arms and neck, headaches, and dizziness.



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Osteoarthritis

SHOULDERS This condition is caused by the erosion of cartilage between joints, causing the bones to press against each other. The narrowing of joint space due to calcification, along with the thickening of tendons in the shoulder joint cause severe pain.



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Osteoarthritis

ELBOWS In this condition, the cartilage between the joints of the elbows wears out, causing inflammation and pain. This can lead to the formation of bone spurs, or the condition of tennis elbow, the latter usually indicated by severe pain in the forearm and elbow.



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Osteoarthritis

WRISTS AND FINGERS In the wrist, this condition is usually the result of an old injury and is characterized by restricted movement and pain in the joint. In the fingers, osteoarthritis is most common at the base of the thumb.



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Osteoarthritis

HIPS This joint is particularly prone to this condition since it bears a lot of weight. Pain is experienced in surrounding areas such as the groin, outer hips, and knees. This can result in a vicious circle. Reduced movement due to pain, leads to more stiffness due to inactivity.



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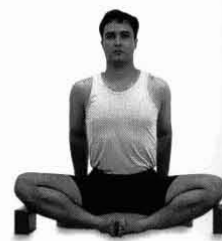
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Osteoarthritis

KNEES A decrease in the synovial fluid that lubricates the knee joint leads to this condition. The cartilage in the area becomes rough and tends to flake off. The knee looks swollen, and the joint loses flexibility and the ability to stretch and bend.



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Osteoarthritis

ANKLES The causes of this condition are the same as in other joints affected by osteoarthritis. The ankles become swollen and tender, and the surrounding skin turns red. Movements become restricted and painful.



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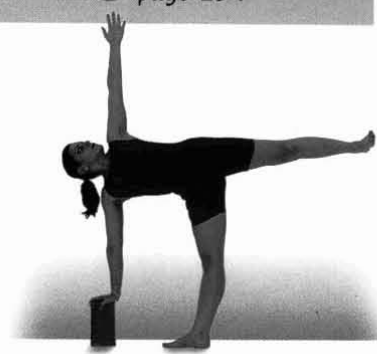
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Rheumatoid arthritis

This is a chronic, systemic, inflammatory condition, which leads to the eventual disability of the joints. The symptoms are stiffness in the mornings, fatigue, burning and swelling of the joints, and the appearance of rheumatoid nodules.



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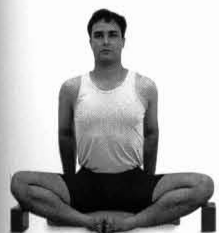
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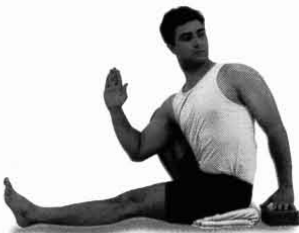
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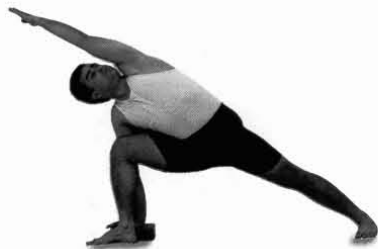
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Skin



THE SKIN, THE LARGEST ORGAN OF THE BODY, is part of the sensory system. It is the principal organ of the sense of touch and it serves to protect the internal organs. The skin also regulates body temperature. It consists of a vascular layer called the dermis, and an external covering called the epidermis. The sweat glands, hair follicles, and sebaceous glands are embedded in the dermis. Disorders of the skin are common, and yoga asanas offer a healthy and effective form of treatment.

Acne

This is a skin disorder caused by inflammation of the sebaceous glands or hair follicles. Acne, appearing as boils, pimples, pustules, spots, or whiteheads, is sometimes triggered by anxiety. It usually affects adolescents, but may persist in later age.



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*"Keep your brain calm and quiet.
Let your body be active."*



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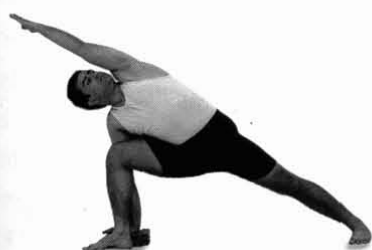
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Eczema

Frequently the result of an inherited allergy, eczema is a chronic but superficial inflammation of the skin, which leads to itching, scaly patches, or blisters. Stress is a common cause of this condition.



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Psoriasis

This is an epidermal disorder that leads to the eruption of dry, silvery, scaly, or inflamed patches, usually on the knees and elbows. It can also affect the scalp, torso, or limbs. Often genetically determined, it can also be caused by stress or hormonal changes.



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Brain & Nervous System



THE MAIN ENGINE OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM is the central nervous system, composed of the brain and the spinal cord, the body's information-gathering, storage, and control centre. Within this, the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous systems control the involuntary functions of the organs, glands, and other parts of the body. Regular practice of the recommended sequences of asanas relieves pressure on the brain and the entire nervous system.

Headache and eye strain

This is characterized by severe, piercing pain around the eyes and temples. Usually, the pain increases rapidly within 15 minutes of inception, but the attack itself can last for up to 2 hours.



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Stress-related headache

This condition usually takes the form of a dull ache at the back of the skull due to the tautness of the muscles of the scalp and neck. It can also occur as a dull, throbbing pain of moderate intensity, usually following a stressful event.



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Memory impairment

The ageing process is often associated with mild loss of memory. However, it is important to distinguish between this and the onset of serious progressive dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease.



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Migraine

This condition is associated with periodic, throbbing headaches, often accompanied by nausea and vomiting. The pain can be at the front, back, or sides of the skull. The attack can be preceded by sensitivity to light, partial loss of vision, and numbness in the lips.



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Epilepsy

This condition is caused when the nerve cells of the brain emit abnormal impulses that disturb the electrical signals by which the brain controls the body. Epileptic seizures occur irregularly. The causes include head injuries, brain infections, and inherited predisposition.



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Sciatica

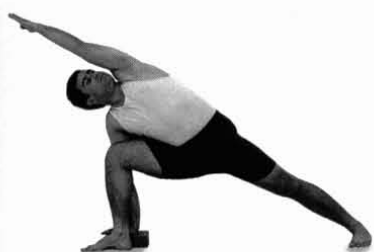
This is due to compression and inflammation of the spinal nerves. A sharp pain radiates from the lower back to the leg and foot in a pattern determined by the nerve that is affected. It feels like an electric shock, and increases with standing or walking.



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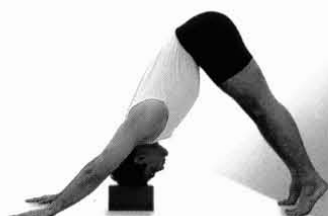
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Mind & Emotions



THE TENSIONS OF DAILY LIFE have an impact on our emotions. In yogic science, the secretions of the hormonal system are believed to influence the mind and the nervous system. Strong emotions are linked to hormonal imbalances which leave us vulnerable to infection and ill health. The following sequences of asanas work on the endocrine glands and the sympathetic and central nervous systems, to pacify the nerves, reduce the respiratory rate, and calm a stressed body and mind.

Irritability

Short bursts of impatience and over-reaction to daily events are the result of stress factors, which arise from major life changes such as divorce or bereavement, and from sleep deprivation, work-related anxieties, or allergies. These asanas help to reduce stress.



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Mental fatigue

This condition is characterized by forgetfulness, irritability, boredom, confusion, lack of concentration, and depression. Its causes include lack of sleep, emotional loss, or stress in the workplace. The potential seriousness of this condition is often underestimated.



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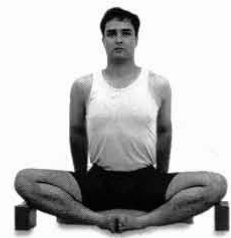
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Insomnia

Periodic wakefulness, difficulty in falling asleep, or waking up too early, are symptoms of insomnia. They can be transient and pass with the life crises that cause them, or they can be chronic, associated with medical or psychiatric conditions, or long-term medication.



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Anxiety

This condition can be either acute or chronic. The physical symptoms associated with it are nausea, hot flushes, dizziness, trembling, muscular tension, headaches, backache, or a tight feeling in the chest.



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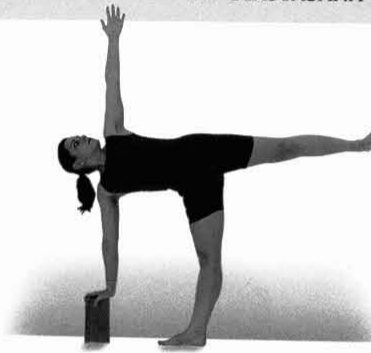
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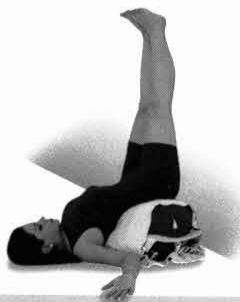
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Hyperventilation

This condition, triggered by stress, is associated with an increase in the rate and depth of breathing, where the body takes in more air than required. If unchecked, this can lead to dizziness, tingling sensations in the fingers and toes, and chest pain.



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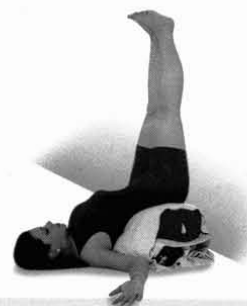
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Depression

This is a mood disorder that arouses feelings of not being in control, anger, or frustration. Other symptoms include an increase or decrease in appetite, sleep disorders, low self-esteem, fatigue, irritability, restlessness, suicidal feelings, and poor concentration.



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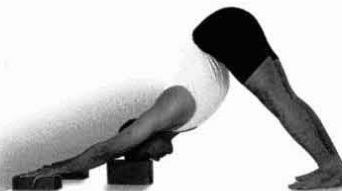
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Alcoholism

This is a chronic, progressive, and often fatal disease, resulting from alcohol abuse. It leads to complications in the brain, liver, heart, and lungs. It depresses the immune system and results in hormonal deficiencies, sexual dysfunction, and infertility.



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Bulimia

Binge-eating followed by purging with self-induced vomiting and the compulsive use of laxatives, are warning signs of this condition. Its causes include low body image and a feeling of not being in control. It is often associated with anorexia (see page 351).



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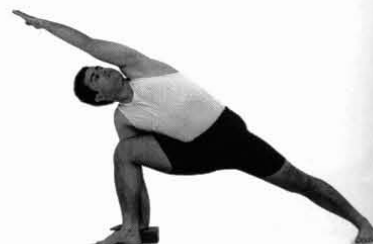
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Anorexia

Pronounced weight loss, triggered off by emotional factors such as low self-esteem and a feeling of not being in control, induce this condition. The symptoms include an acute preoccupation with body size which leads to very low food intake, and excessive exercising.



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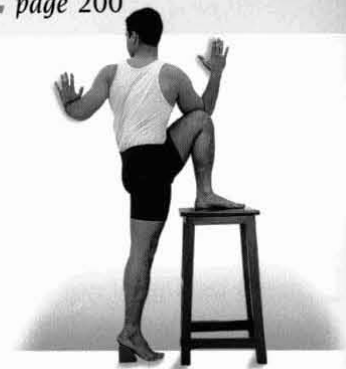
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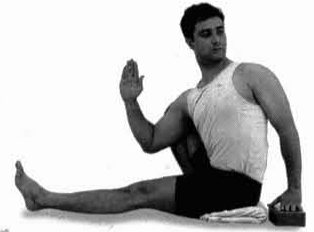
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Drug addiction

The constant and long-term abuse of drugs, taken orally, intravenously, smoked, or snorted, can lead to delirium, depersonalization, panic attacks, severe paranoia, and impaired memory. Heavy doses can even be fatal.



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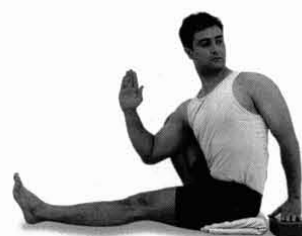
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Women's Health



PRACTISING YOGA CAN HELP to prevent or reduce the severity of many ailments that specifically affect women, by providing a form of treatment directed at the basic causes. For instance, yoga can help correct gynaecological factors that lead to hypertension, diabetes, indigestion, degeneration in the bones and joints, hernia, and varicose veins. Yoga also helps to regulate menstrual disorders, thyroid imbalance, the effects of osteoporosis, and the side effects of menopause.

Menstruation

Menstruation is not an ailment, but it can sometimes cause discomfort. When menstruating, avoid inversions and standing poses, but practise forward bends, as they control the flow of blood and check excess discharge. The following sequence tones your system.



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“Spiritual yoga uses the intellect of the heart as well as the head.”



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Menstrual pain

Cramps in the pelvic region, just before or during menstruation, are caused by contractions of the uterus while it sheds its lining. Nausea, headaches, and frequent bowel movements, often accompany these cramps.



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Premenstrual syndrome

This is a condition that occurs 3-4 days before menstruation, and is relieved by its onset. The symptoms include mood swings, abdominal cramps, lower backache, and aching legs.



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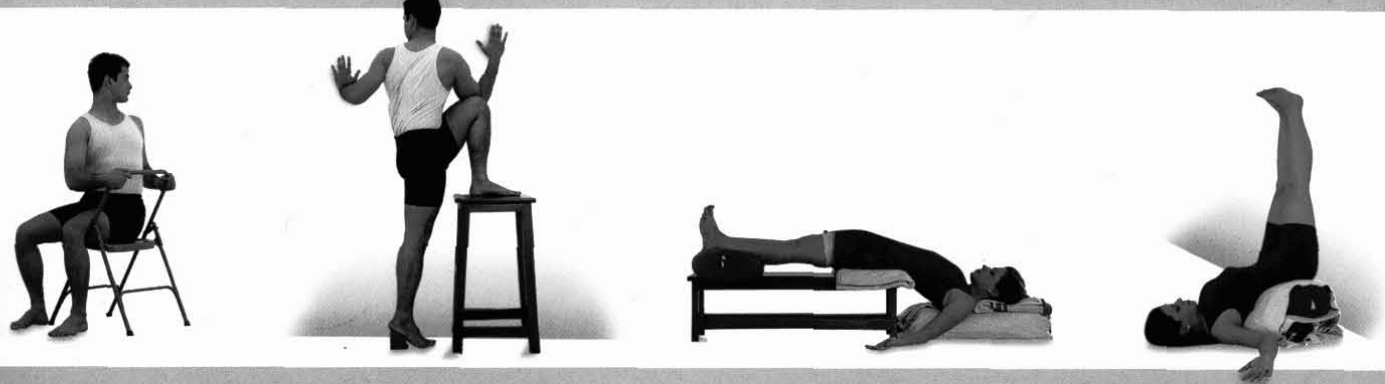
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Menopause

The cessation of the menstrual cycle, usually between the ages of 45 to 55, can occur abruptly or after a series of irregular periods. Menopause triggers hormonal changes and may cause sweating, hot flushes, depression, insomnia, and mood swings.



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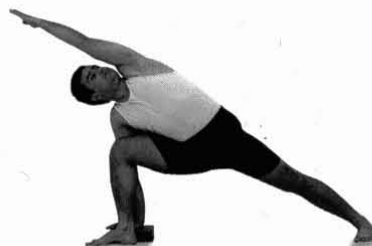
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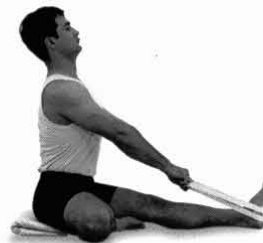
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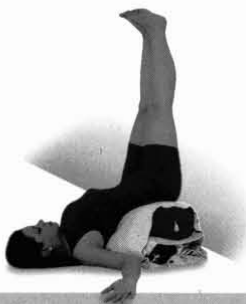
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Metrorrhagia

This condition is characterized by irregular and heavy bleeding between menstrual periods. The causes include uterine cysts and fibroids, miscarriage, uterine inflammation, or displacement of the uterus.



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Leukorrhoea

Excess white discharge from the vagina can cause acute discomfort and embarrassment. It is usually caused by stress, the presence of a foreign body in the vagina, or an infection.



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Menorrhagia

Abnormally heavy or long periods, at more or less regular intervals, can be caused by fibroids, hormonal imbalances, or the presence of an IUD. These periods can last up to a week, and are often marked by heavy clotting.



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Absent periods

This condition is also called amenorrhoea, the absence of menses. It can be primary, when the periods do not occur at all, or secondary, when periods are absent for three or more cycles. The causes for this condition include heavy exercise, stress, or eating disorders.



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Prolapsed uterus

This condition occurs when the muscles and ligaments of the pelvis become weak and slack, and results in the uterus slipping out of position. It can be caused by age, obesity, or frequent childbirth.



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Infertility

Sometimes, even after a year of unprotected intercourse, a woman is unable to conceive. The causes of this problem include hormonal imbalance, tumours, cysts, a dysfunction in ovulation, or pelvic infections.



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*“Do not stop trying just because
perfection eludes you.”*

Men's Health



NEARLY HALF OF ALL ADULT MEN face some form of impotence at some time in their lives. The treatment of this, and many other disorders that relate to the male reproductive organs and glands, is helped by regular practice of the prescribed sequences of asanas. The enlargement of the prostate gland and various forms of hernia are common problems that affect men above the age of 50. These ailments respond to the practice of yoga.

Impotence

This is the inability, often temporary, to achieve or maintain an erection. The causes can be structural, hormonal, neurological, or psychological. It can also be caused by the side effects of medicines or substance abuse.



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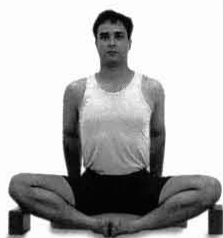
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Prostate problems

This gland can be affected by prostatic hyperplasia or an abnormal growth of the prostate gland. Prostate problems can also be due to prostatitis, an inflammation of the prostate gland leading to pain and obstruction in the outlet from the bladder.



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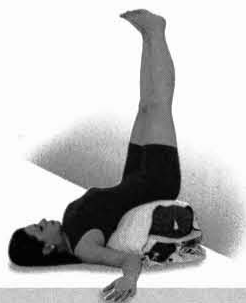
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Hiatus hernia

In this condition, the upper part of the stomach moves into the chest through a rupture in the diaphragm called a hiatus. It usually affects middle-aged and overweight people. The symptoms include pain and a burning sensation in the chest.



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Inguinal hernia

This occurs when the intestine protrudes through a weak point or tear into the lower layers of the abdominal wall. A direct inguinal hernia creates a bulge in the groin area, while an indirect inguinal hernia descends into the scrotum.



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Umbilical hernia

This condition sometimes affects infants, and occurs in the region of the umbilicus. It usually corrects itself naturally. It also occurs in adults when the intestine protrudes through the abdominal wall at the navel.



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*“Asanas will help transform
away from an awareness
consciousness of*



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*an individual by taking the person
of just the body, toward the
the soul."*





“Our body is the bow and the asanas are the arrows to hit the target – the soul.”

Iyengar Yoga Course

Learning a new subject requires dedication and perseverance. In yoga, the physical body, the sense organs, the emotions, mind, and consciousness are trained slowly and gradually. A beginner starts with simple asanas and progresses to more complex ones by building up strength and concentration. Advanced students of yoga, too, should practise asanas in a logical sequence that allows them to experience the full effectiveness of each asana. Understanding sequencing is a gradual process. Just as a car cannot pick up speed in first gear, we require time and patience to understand the subtleties and technical requirements of asanas.

Guide to your Yoga Practice

This course takes you from simple to complex asanas. Follow the sequence listed for each week, as this not only makes your practice more effective, but also minimizes the possibility of injury or strain.

People start yoga with many preconceptions; some expect instant cures to ailments, others assume that the simplest of asanas will be difficult to achieve. These are usually people whose muscles are stiff, and whose posture is often faulty. Even the physically fit may not possess the stability of body or mind needed to practise correctly. A beginner must, therefore, practise asanas at a very basic level at first, then continue practising regularly, until the intelligence penetrates all the sheaths of his or her body (see page 24).

ADVICE FOR BEGINNERS

Initially, practise as many asanas of the sequence as you feel comfortable with. Do not exhaust your strength or stamina. Begin with small expectations. Restructuring muscles, bones, tissues, posture, and internal organs takes time. In Iyengar yoga, basic movements, such as turning out the right foot or interlocking the fingers, are called "motions". More subtle movements as, for example, lifting the kneecap, tightening the groin, and drawing in the kidneys, are regarded as "actions". Motions get you into a pose, actions refine it. Understand the motions first. Learn *how* to observe, rather than *what* you must observe. Grasping the essence of the asana is more important than getting the movements right. Some instructions may seem absurd – even impossible – to beginners. Gradually, however, you will become aware of the complexity and subtlety of the body's movements in each increasingly simple manoeuvre,

not as an abstraction, but as a necessity. Eventually, understanding the actions of an asana will establish the rhythm and pace of your practice.

The yoga course begins with simple asanas, which prepare the body to perform the more complicated asanas with ease. You will learn to access levels of yourself that you were unaware existed. The asana connects you to the inner world within you.

SCHEDULING YOUR PRACTICE

Practise asanas when you feel fresh and energetic. Early in the morning, if your muscles are not stiff, or early evenings, when the muscles are supple and free, is advisable. Do not practise just after a heavy meal. The duration of your practice is flexible. Learn to know when to stop.

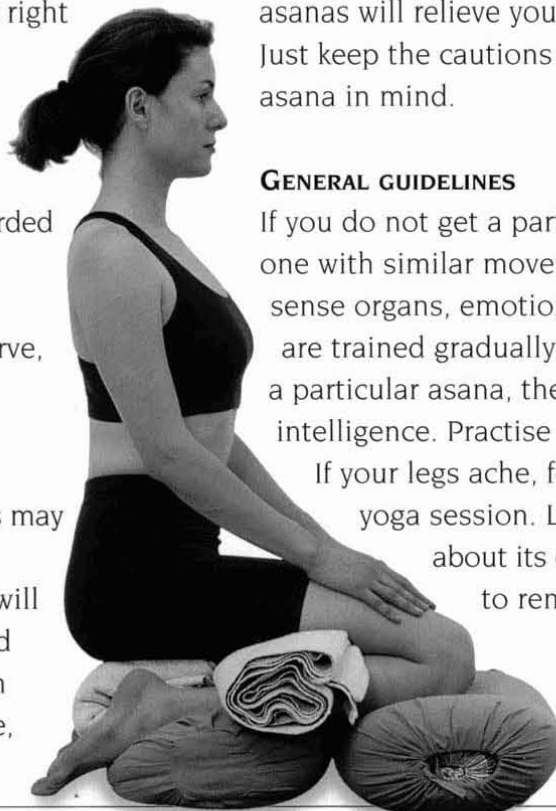
Make your yoga sessions a daily practice. If you are tired or a part of your body is aching, practising asanas will relieve your body of tension and strain. Just keep the cautions at the beginning of each asana in mind.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

If you do not get a particular asana right, practise one with similar movements. The physical body, sense organs, emotions, mind, and consciousness are trained gradually in yoga. If you stop practising a particular asana, the body loses a part of its intelligence. Practise different types of asanas.

If your legs ache, for instance, do not avoid your yoga session. Locate the discomfort, think about its cause, and understand how to remove it. Through your

HOLDING THE POSE
Concentrate completely when you are in the final pose



intelligence, introduce a soothing sensation into that area. Delve deep into your consciousness and extend a feeling of calm to the part of your body that needs it most.

YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Co-ordinate your practice with the state of your body and mind. Hot summer days can make you feel exhausted or dehydrated. Practise with props to relax. For example, perform Salamba Sarvangasana with the help of a chair and a bolster. Reclining asanas, inversions, and resting asanas are also suitable as they slow down the metabolism, calm all parts of the body and mind, and conserve energy. In winter, standing asanas, back bends, and inversions help to combat colds, arthritis, and seasonal depression. Twists, forward bends, and inversions help to counter the effects of damp conditions.

SEQUENCE

Practising asanas in the prescribed order enhances their effectiveness as well as your experience of each asana. Understanding the significance of sequencing takes time. Grasp the subtleties and movements of each asana and its impact on your body, before attempting to formulate an order which suits your personal needs. Follow the 20-Week Yoga Course until you feel confident enough to develop your own sequence. Those suffering from specific ailments, however, should follow the asana sequences appropriate to their condition, given in Chapter 5 (see pages 238-283).

TIMING

As far as possible, hold the final pose for the recommended time to maximize the benefits and build strength. However, timing also depends on attention. The intelligence of the brain rises and drops very fast, but the body's intelligence cannot be awakened at the same speed. You have to bring awareness to all parts of the body for the whole time you are in the pose.

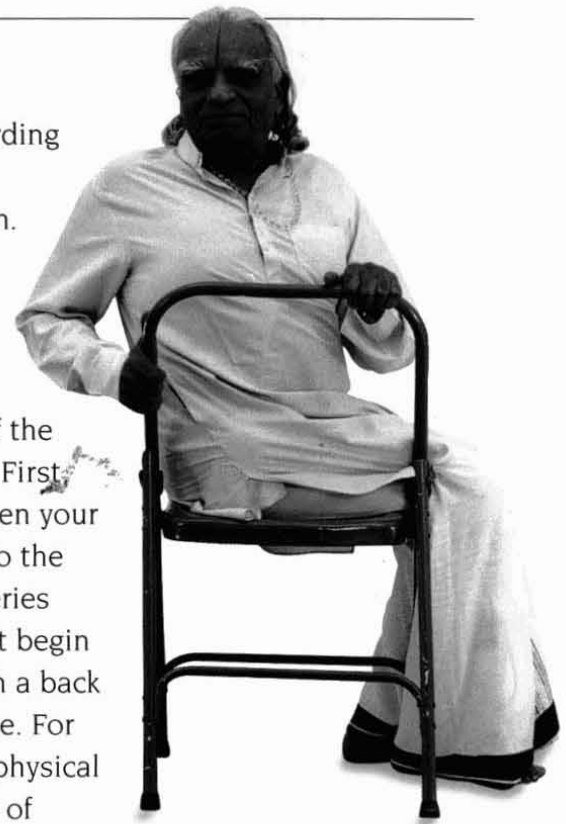
Ultimately, use your discrimination to decide the sequence, timing, and nature of the asanas you want

to practise, according to your age and physical condition. Keep your progress in developing an awareness and understanding of the asanas in mind. First stretch and awaken your body and mind to the logic behind a series of asanas. Do not begin your session with a back bend, for instance. For those in perfect physical condition, cycles of asanas can be worked out fairly easily. If your condition is less than

perfect, evolve a sequence which suits your body's requirements. There should be a physical, physiological, psychological, and spiritual rhythm in your practice of yoga.

FORMULATING YOUR OWN PRACTICE

All the asanas listed in the 20-Week Yoga Course are simple poses, made even easier with props. Practise Virabhadrasana 1 and 2 (see pages 76 and 56), against a wall for the first few weeks. Once you feel comfortable in the pose, practise without the support of the wall. Similarly, after about 6 months (this can vary from person to person) of practising Utthita Trikonasana, place your hand on the floor, instead of on the block. Attempt Halasana, Salamba Sarvangasana, and Urdhva Dhanurasana without props after 6 months. It might take up to 8 months to achieve Salamba Sirsasana without the support of the wall. Attempt Trianga Mukhaikapada Paschimottanasana after 6 months, sequencing it after Janu Sirsasana and Paschimottanasana. As your muscles and joints become supple, props will become a hindrance, and you will progress smoothly to the classic poses without them.



BALANCE AND HARMONY.
Yogacharya Iyengar in a variation
of Bharadvajasana

20-Week Yoga Course

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4. Uttanasana 1 <i>foam block</i> & 5 <i>wooden blocks</i>	179
5. Adhomukha Svanasana 3 <i>blocks*</i>	184
6. Dandasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	187
7. Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	188
8. Adhomukha Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	203
9. Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters (legs apart)</i>	198
10. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	206
11. Setubandha Sarvangasana 4 <i>bolsters</i>	219
12. Savasana	150

*blocks are wooden unless otherwise specified

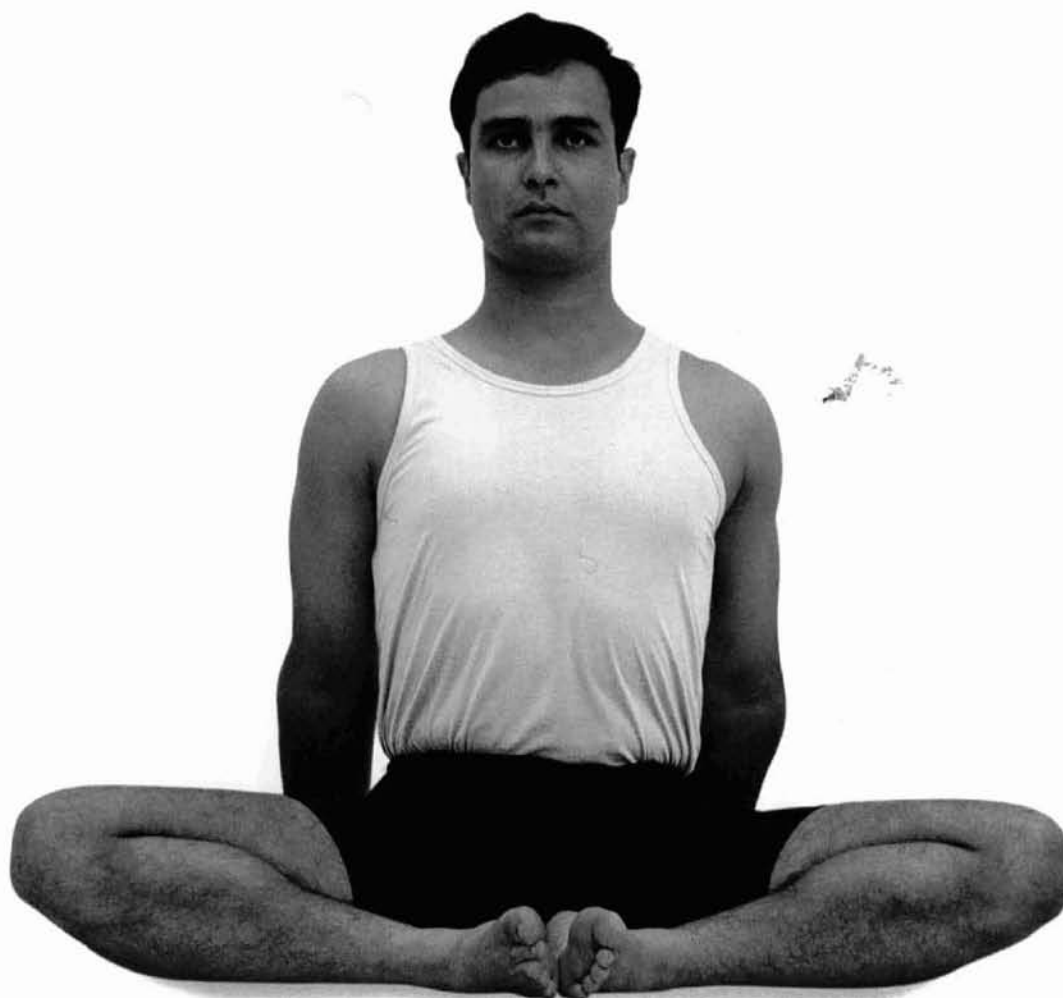


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5. Utthita Trikonasana 1 <i>block</i>	174
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13. Paschimottanasana 2 <i>bolsters</i> & 1 <i>belt (legs apart)</i>	198
14. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>chair (sitting sideways)</i>	205
15. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> , 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>belt</i>	226
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5. Utthita Trikonasana 1 <i>block</i>	174
6. Uttanasana 1 <i>foam block</i> & 5 <i>wooden blocks</i>	179
7. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 <i>block (heels against a wall)</i>	186
8. Dandasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	187
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10. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>belt</i>	189
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14. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>chair (sitting sideways)</i>	205
15. Utthita Marichyasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>rounded block</i> & a <i>wall</i>	208
16. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> , 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>belt</i>	226
17. Setubandha Sarvangasana 4 <i>bolsters</i>	219
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2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastanasana <i>against a wall</i>	169	11. Virasana <i>1 rolled blanket & 1 block</i>	188	20. Bharadvajasana <i>1 chair (sitting sideways)</i>	205
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastanasana <i>against a wall</i>	170	12. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana <i>1 belt</i>	189	21. Bharadvajasana <i>1 chair (legs through chair back)</i>	205
4. Tadasana Paschima Baddha Namaskar	171	13. Swastikasana	191	22. Utthita Marichyasana <i>1 stool, 1 rounded block & a wall</i>	208
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173	14. Baddhakonasana <i>2 blocks & 1 bolster (parallel to the hips)</i>	190	23. Parsva Virasana <i>1 rolled blanket & 2 blocks</i>	210
6. Utthita Trikonasana <i>1 block</i>	174	15. Upavista Konasana	195	24. Supta Baddhakonasana <i>1 blanket, 1 bolster, 2 blocks & 1 belt</i>	226
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana <i>1 block</i>	176	16. Adhomukha Virasana <i>2 blankets & 2 bolsters</i>	203	25. Supta Padangusthasana <i>1 belt</i>	224
8. Uttanasana <i>1 foam block & 5 wooden blocks</i>	179	17. Paschimottanasana <i>2 bolsters & 1 belt (legs apart)</i>	198	26. Setubandha Sarvangasana <i>4 bolsters</i>	219
9. Adhomukha Svanasana <i>1 block (heels against a wall)</i>	186	18. Janu Sirsasana <i>1 stool, 1 blanket & 1 bolster</i>	200	27. Savasana	150

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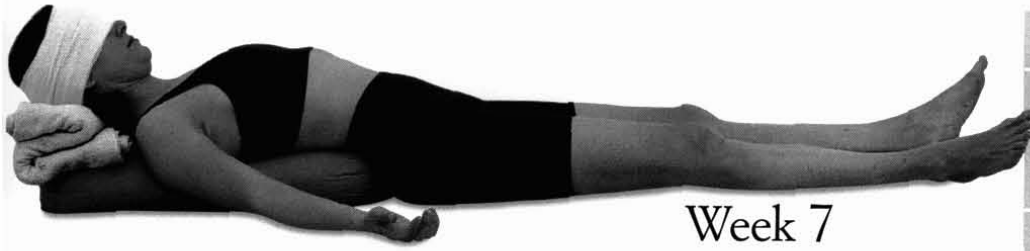
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21. Paschimottanasana <i>3 bolsters</i>	197
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24. Bharadvajasana <i>1 chair (sitting sideways)</i>	205
25. Bharadvajasana <i>1 chair (legs through chair back)</i>	205
26. Bharadvajasana <i>1 blanket & 2 blocks</i>	206
27. Utthita Marichyasana <i>1 stool, 1 rounded block & a wall</i>	208
28. Parsva Virasana <i>1 rolled blanket & 2 blocks</i>	211
29. Supta Baddhakonasana <i>1 blanket, 1 bolster, 2 blocks & 1 belt</i>	226
30. Supta Padangusthasana <i>1 belt</i>	224
31. Supta Padangusthasana <i>1 block & 1 belt</i>	225
32. Setubandha Sarvangasana <i>1 bench, 1 blanket & 2 bolsters</i>	219
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9. Virabhadrasana 2	56
10. Ardha Chandrasana <i>1 block</i>	178
11. Adhomukha Svanasana <i>1 bolster</i>	186
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27. Bharadvajasana 1 chair (sitting sideways)	205
28. Bharadvajasana 1 chair (legs through chair back)	205
29. Bharadvajasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	206
30. Marichyasana 1 blanket & 1 block	207
31. Utthita Marichyasana 1 stool, 1 rounded block & a wall	208
32. Parsva Virasana 1 blanket & 1 block	210
33. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 blanket, 1 bolster, 2 blocks & 1 belt	226
34. Supta Virasana 1 blanket & 1 bolster	228
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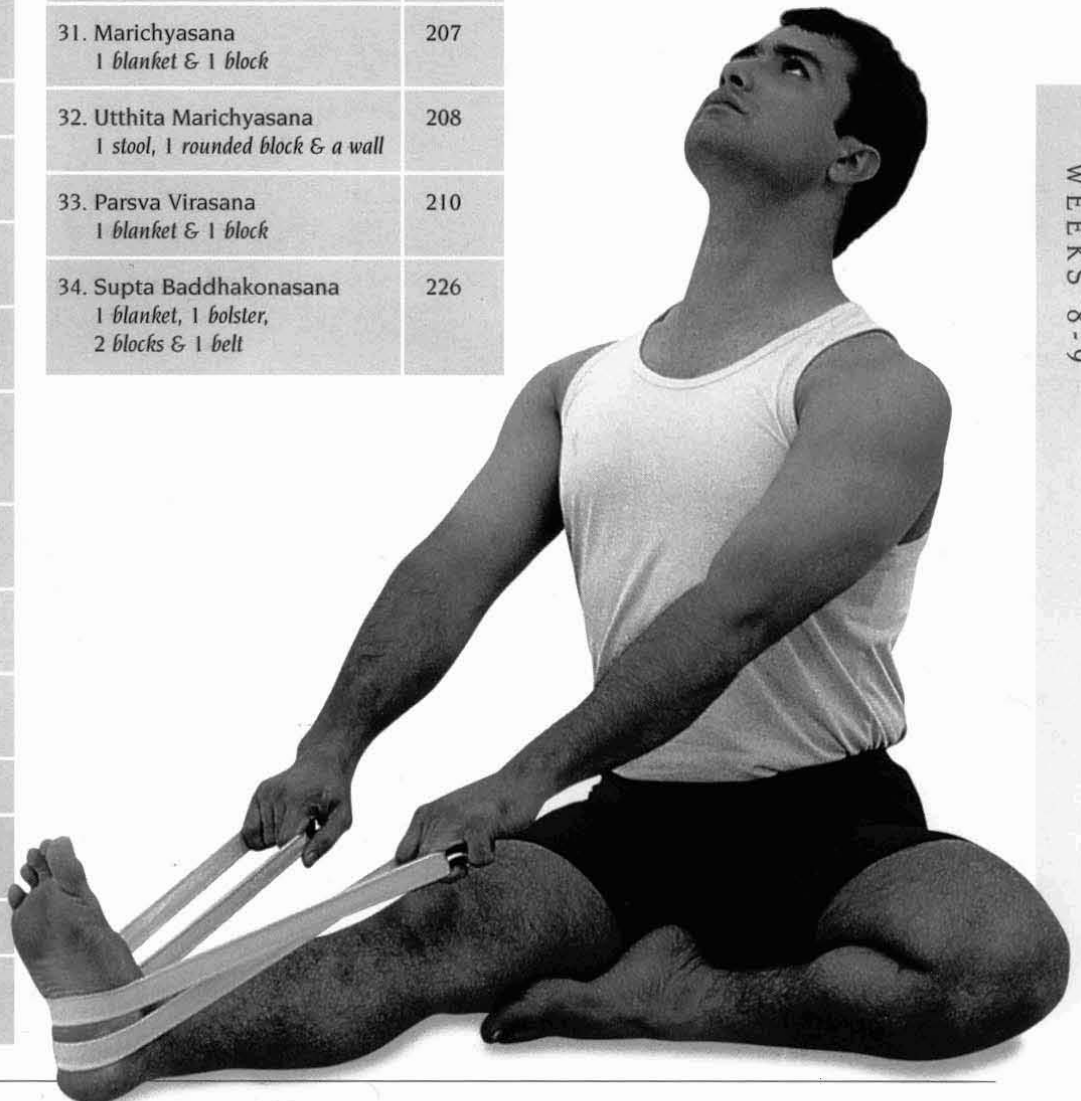
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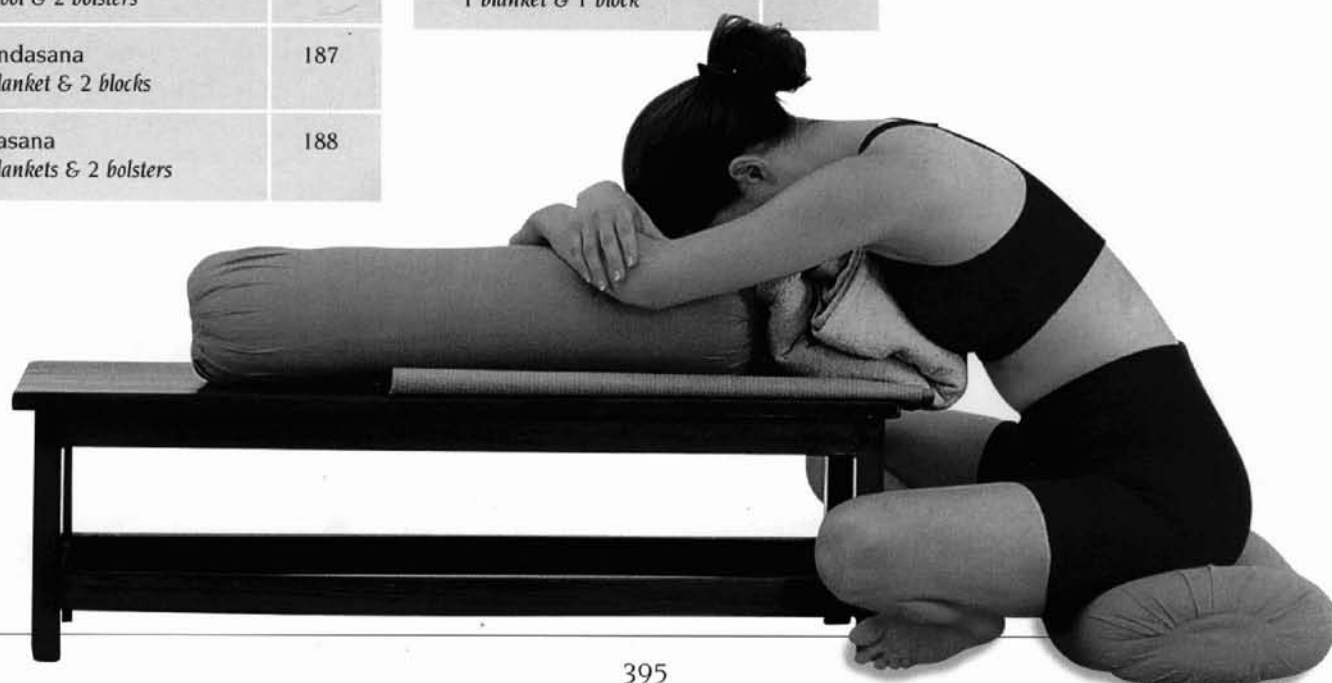
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39. Halasana <i>1 chair, 1 stool, 1 blanket & 2 bolsters</i>	214
40. Setubandha Sarvangasana <i>1 bench, 3 blankets & 1 bolster</i>	218
41. Viparita Karani <i>1 blanket, 1 block & 2 bolsters</i>	216
42. Savasana <i>1 blanket, 1 bolster & 1 bandage</i>	234



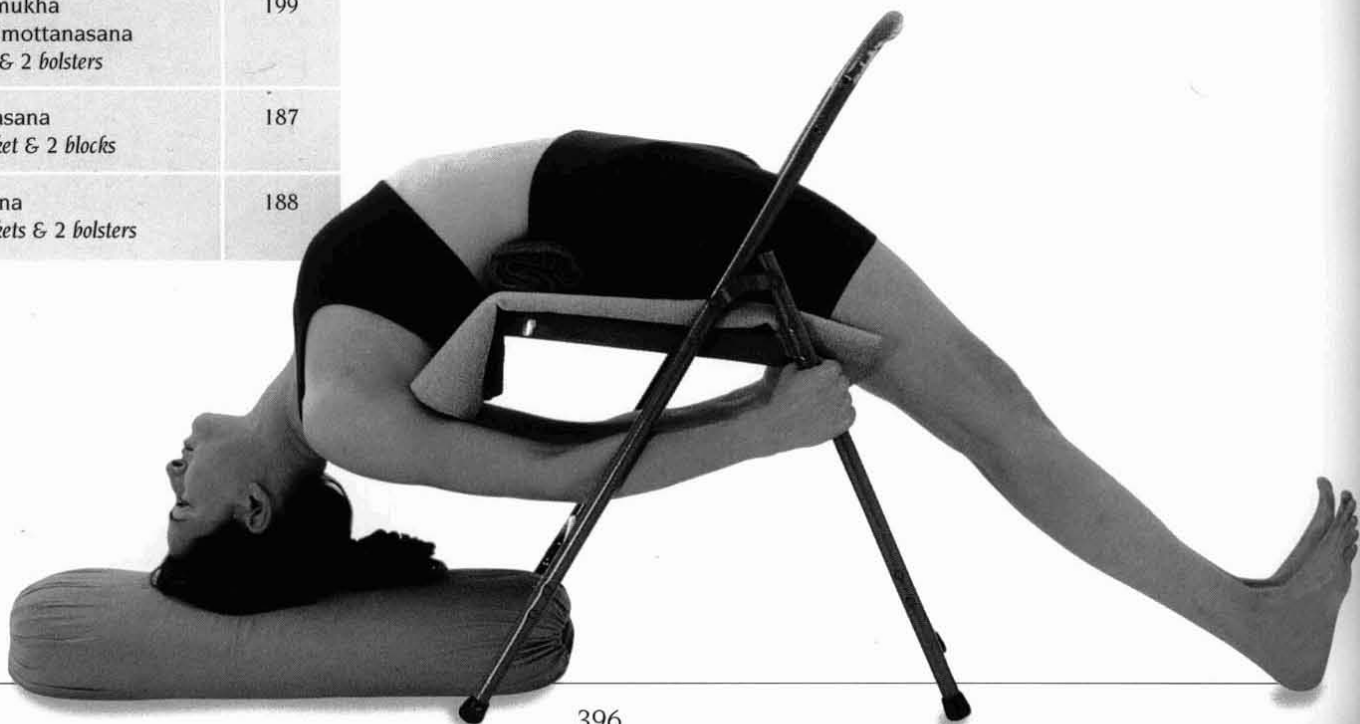
Week 11

Asanas	Page	Asanas	Page	Asanas	Page
1. Tadasana Samasthithi <i>against a wall</i>	168	18. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>belt</i>	189	32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>rounded block</i> & a <i>wall</i>	208
2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	169	19. Swastikasana	191	33. Parsva Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	210
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	170	20. Baddhakonasana 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	190	34. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> , 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>belt</i>	226
4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172	21. Upavista Konasana	195	35. Supta Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	228
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173	22. Paripurna Navasana 2 <i>belts</i>	194	36. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i>	224
6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 <i>block</i>	174	23. Adhomukha Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	202	37. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	225
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 <i>block</i>	176	24. Adhomukha Swastikasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	204	38. Salamba Sarvangasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	212
8. Virabhadrasana 1	76	25. Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i> (<i>legs together</i>)	198	39. Halasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	214
9. Virabhadrasana 2	56	26. Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	200	40. Setubandha Sarvangasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 3 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	218
10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 <i>block</i>	178	27. Paschimottanasana 2 <i>bolsters</i>	196	41. Viparita Karani 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>block</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	216
11. Parsvottanasana	64	28. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>chair</i> (<i>sitting sideways</i>)	205	42. Savasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> & 1 <i>bandage</i>	234
12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 <i>bolster</i>	186	29. Bharadvajasana (<i>legs through a chair back</i>)	205		
13. Prasarita Padottanasana 1 <i>block</i> or 1 <i>bolster</i>	183	30. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	206		
14. Uttanasana 1 <i>foam block</i> & 5 <i>wooden blocks</i>	179	31. Marichyasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	207		
15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	199				
16. Dandasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	187				
17. Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	188				



Week 12

Asanas	Page	Asanas	Page	Asanas	Page
1. Tadasana Samasthithi <i>against a wall</i>	168	18. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>belt</i>	189	31. Marichyasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	207
2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	169	19. Swastikasana	191	32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>block</i> & a <i>wall</i>	208
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	170	20. Baddhakonasana 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	190	33. Parsva Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	210
4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172	21. Upavista Konasana	195	34. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> , 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>belt</i>	226
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173	22. Paripurna Navasana 2 <i>belts</i>	194	35. Supta Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	228
6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 <i>block</i>	174	23. Adhomukha Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	202	36. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i>	224
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 <i>block</i>	176	24. Adhomukha Swastikasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	204	37. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	225
8. Virabhadrasana 1	76	25. Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i> (<i>legs together</i>)	198	38. Salamba Sarvangasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	212
9. Virabhadrasana 2	56	26. Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	200	39. Halasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	214
10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 <i>block</i>	178	27. Paschimottanasana 2 <i>bolsters</i>	196	40. Setubandha Sarvangasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 3 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	218
11. Parsvottanasana	64	28. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>chair</i> (<i>sitting sideways</i>)	205	41. Viparita Karani 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>block</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	216
12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 <i>bolster</i>	186	29. Bharadvajasana (<i>legs through a chair back</i>)	205	42. Savasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> & 1 <i>bandage</i>	234
13. Prasrita Padottanasana 1 <i>block</i> or 1 <i>bolster</i>	183	30. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>blankets</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	206		
14. Uttanasana 1 <i>foam block</i> & 5 <i>wooden blocks</i>	179				
15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	199				
16. Dandasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	187				
17. Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	188				



Week 13

Asanas	Page
1. Tadasana Samasthithi <i>against a wall</i>	168
2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	169
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	170
4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173
6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 <i>block</i>	174
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 <i>block</i>	176
8. Virabhadrasana 1	76
9. Virabhadrasana 2	56
10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 <i>block</i>	178
11. Parsvottanasana	64
12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 <i>bolster</i>	186
13. Prasara Padottanasana 1 <i>block</i> or 1 <i>bolster</i>	183
14. Uttanasana 1 <i>foam block</i> & 5 <i>wooden blocks</i>	179
15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	199
16. Dandasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	187
17. Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	188
18. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>belt</i>	189
19. Swastikasana	191
20. Baddhakonasana 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	190
21. Upavista Konasana	195
22. Paripurna Navasana 2 <i>belts</i>	194
23. Adhomukha Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	202

Asanas	Page
24. Adhomukha Swastikasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	204
25. Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i> (legs together)	198
26. Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	200
27. Paschimottanasana 2 <i>bolsters</i>	196
28. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>chair</i> 1 <i>chair</i> (sitting sideways)	205
29. Bharadvajasana (legs through a chair back)	205
30. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	206
31. Marichyasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	207
32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>rounded block</i> & a <i>wall</i>	208
33. Parsva Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	210
34. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> , 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>belt</i>	226
35. Supta Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	228
36. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i>	224
37. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	225
38. Salamba Sirsasana <i>against a wall</i>	118
39. Salamba Sarvangasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	212
40. Halasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	214
41. Setubandha Sarvangasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 3 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	218
42. Viparita Karani 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>block</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	216
43. Savasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> & 1 <i>bandage</i>	234



Week 14

Asanas	Page
1. Tadasana Samasthithi <i>against a wall</i>	168
2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	169
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	170
4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173
6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 <i>block</i>	174
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 <i>block</i>	176
8. Virabhadrasana 1	76
9. Virabhadrasana 2	56
10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 <i>block</i>	178
11. Parsvottanasana	64
12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 <i>bolster</i>	186
13. Prasara Padottanasana 1 <i>block</i> or 1 <i>bolster</i>	183
14. Uttanasana 1 <i>foam block</i> & 5 <i>wooden blocks</i>	179
15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	199
16. Dandasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	187
17. Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	188
18. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>belt</i>	189
19. Swastikasana	191
20. Baddhakonasana 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	190
21. Upavista Konasana	195
22. Paripurna Navasana 2 <i>belts</i>	194
23. Adhomukha Virasana 2 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	202

Asanas	Page
24. Adhomukha Swastikasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	204
25. Paschimottanasana 1 <i>stool</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i> (<i>legs together</i>)	198
26. Janu Sirsasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	200
27. Paschimottanasana 2 <i>bolsters</i>	196
28. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>chair</i> (<i>sitting sideways</i>)	205
29. Bharadvajasana (<i>legs through a chair back</i>)	205
30. Bharadvajasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>blocks</i>	206
31. Marichyasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	207
32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>rounded block</i> & a <i>wall</i>	208
33. Parsva Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	210
34. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> , 2 <i>blocks</i> & 1 <i>belt</i>	226
35. Supta Virasana 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	228
36. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i>	224
37. Supta Padangusthasana 1 <i>belt</i> & 1 <i>block</i>	225
38. Salamba Sirsasana <i>against a wall</i>	118
39. Salamba Sarvangasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	212
40. Halasana 1 <i>chair</i> , 1 <i>stool</i> , 1 <i>blanket</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	214
41. Setubandha Sarvangasana 1 <i>bench</i> , 3 <i>blankets</i> & 1 <i>bolster</i>	218
42. Viparita Karani 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>block</i> & 2 <i>bolsters</i>	216
43. Savasana 1 <i>blanket</i> , 1 <i>bolster</i> & 1 <i>bandage</i>	234



Week 15

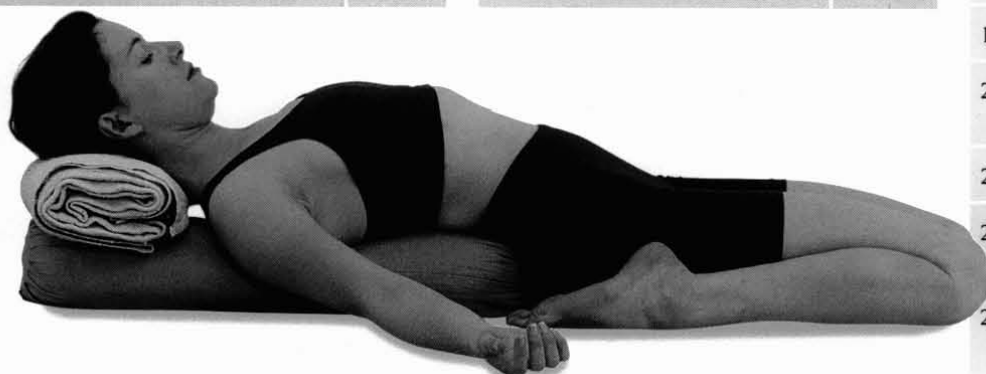
Asanas	Page
1. Tadasana Samasthithi <i>against a wall</i>	168
2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	169
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana <i>against a wall</i>	170
4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173
6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 <i>block</i>	174
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 <i>block</i>	176
8. Virabhadrasana 1	76
9. Virabhadrasana 2	56
10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 <i>block</i>	178
11. Parsvottanasana	64
12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 <i>bolster</i>	186
13. Prasara Padottanasana 1 <i>block</i> or 1 <i>bolster</i>	183

Week 16

Asanas	Page
14. Uttanasana 1 foam block & 5 wooden blocks	179
15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 stool & 2 bolsters	199
16. Dandasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	187
17. Virasana 2 blankets & 2 bolsters	188
18. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana 1 belt	189
19. Swastikasana	191
20. Baddhakonasana 2 blocks & 1 bolster	190
21. Upavista Konasana	195
22. Paripurna Navasana 2 belts	194
23. Adhomukha Virasana 2 blankets & 1 bolster	202
24. Adhomukha Swastikasana 1 bench, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	204
25. Paschimottanasana 1 stool & 2 bolsters (legs together)	198
26. Janu Sirsasana 1 stool, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	200
27. Paschimottanasana 2 bolsters	196
28. Bharadvajasana 1 chair (sitting sideways)	205
29. Bharadvajasana (legs through a chair back)	205
30. Bharadvajasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	206

Asanas	Page
31. Marichyasana 1 blanket & 1 block	207
32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 stool, 1 rounded block & a wall	208
33. Parsva Virasana 1 blanket & 1 block	210
34. Viparita Dandasana 1 chair, 1 stool, 2 blankets 1 bolster & 1 belt	221
35. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 blanket, 1 bolster, 2 blocks & 1 belt	226
36. Supta Virasana 1 blanket & 1 bolster	228
37. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt	224
38. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt & 1 block	225
39. Salamba Sirsasana against a wall	118
40. Salamba Sarvangasana 1 chair, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	212
41. Halasana 1 chair, 1 stool, 1 blanket & 2 bolsters	214
42. Setubandha Sarvangasana 1 bench, 3 blankets & 1 bolster	218
43. Viparita Karani 1 blanket, 1 block & 2 bolsters	216
44. Savasana 1 blanket, 1 bolster & 1 bandage	234
45. Ujjayi Pranayama 2 blankets, 2 foam blocks, 2 wooden blocks & 1 bandage	230

Asanas	Page
1. Tadasana Samasthithi against a wall	168
2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana against a wall	169
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana against a wall	170
4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173
6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 block	174
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 block	176
8. Virabhadrasana 1	76
9. Virabhadrasana 2	56
10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 block	178
11. Parsvottanasana	64
12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 bolster	186
13. Prasara Padottanasana 1 block or 1 bolster	183
14. Uttanasana 1 foam block & 5 wooden blocks	179
15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 stool & 2 bolsters	199
16. Dandasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	187
17. Virasana 2 blankets & 2 bolsters	188
18. Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana 1 belt	189
19. Swastikasana	191
20. Baddhakonasana 2 blocks & 1 bolster	190
21. Upavista Konasana	195
22. Paripurna Navasana 2 belts	194
23. Adhomukha Virasana 2 blankets & 1 bolster	202



Week 17



Asanas	Page
24. Adhomukha Swastikasana 1 bench, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	204
25. Paschimottanasana 1 stool & 2 bolsters (legs together)	198
26. Janu Sirsasana 1 stool, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	200
27. Paschimottanasana 2 bolsters	196
28. Bharadvajasana 1 chair (sitting sideways)	205
29. Bharadvajasana (legs through a chair back)	205
30. Bharadvajasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	206
31. Marichyasana 1 blanket & 1 block	207
32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 stool, 1 rounded block & a wall	208
33. Parsva Virasana 1 blanket & 1 block	210
34. Viparita Dandasana 1 chair, 1 stool, 2 blankets 1 bolster & 1 belt	221
35. Ustrasana 2 stools, 1 blanket & 2 bolsters	222

Asanas	Page
36. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 blanket, 1 bolster, 2 blocks & 1 belt	226
37. Supta Virasana 1 blanket & 1 bolster	228
38. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt	224
39. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt & 1 block	225
40. Salamba Sirsasana against a wall	118
41. Salamba Sarvangasana 1 chair, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	212
42. Halasana 1 chair, 1 stool, 1 blanket & 2 bolsters	214
43. Setubandha Sarvangasana 1 bench, 3 blankets & 1 bolster	218
44. Viparita Karani 1 blanket, 1 block & 2 bolsters	216
45. Savasana 1 blanket, 1 bolster & 1 bandage	234
46. Ujjayi Pranayama 2 blankets, 2 foam blocks, 2 wooden blocks & 1 bandage	230

Asanas	Page
1. Tadasana Samasthithi against a wall	168
2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana against a wall	169
3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana against a wall	170
4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172
5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173
6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 block	174
7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 block	176
8. Virabhadrasana 1	76
9. Virabhadrasana 2	56
10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 block	178
11. Parsvottanasana	64
12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 bolster	186
13. Prasara Padottanasana 1 block or 1 bolster	183
14. Uttanasana 1 foam block & 5 wooden blocks	179
15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 stool & 2 bolsters	199
16. Dandasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	187
17. Virasana 2 blankets & 2 bolsters	188
18. Urdhva Janu Sirsasana 1 belt	189
19. Swastikasana	191
20. Baddhakonasana 2 blocks & 1 bolster	190
21. Upavista Konasana	195
22. Paripurna Navasana 2 belts	194
23. Adhomukha Virasana 2 blankets & 1 bolster	202
24. Adhomukha Swastikasana 1 bench, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	204

Week 18

Asanas	Page	Asanas	Page	Asanas	Page
25. Paschimottanasana 1 stool & 2 bolsters (legs together)	198	1. Tadasana Samasthithi against a wall	168	26. Janu Sirsasana 1 stool, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	200
26. Janu Sirsasana 1 stool, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	200	2. Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana against a wall	169	27. Paschimottanasana 2 bolsters	196
27. Paschimottanasana 2 bolsters	196	3. Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana against a wall	170	28. Bharadvajasana 1 chair (sitting sideways)	205
28. Bharadvajasana 1 chair (sitting sideways)	205	4. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	172	29. Bharadvajasana (legs through a chair back)	205
29. Bharadvajasana (legs through a chair back)	205	5. Tadasana Gomukhasana	173	30. Bharadvajasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	206
30. Bharadvajasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	206	6. Utthita Trikonasana 1 block	174	31. Marichyasana 1 blanket & 1 block	207
31. Marichyasana 1 blanket & 1 block	207	7. Utthita Parsvakonasana 1 block	176	32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 stool, 1 rounded block & a wall	208
32. Utthita Marichyasana 1 stool, 1 rounded block & a wall	208	8. Virabhadrasana 1	76	33. Parsva Virasana 1 blanket & 1 block	210
33. Parsva Virasana 1 blanket & 1 block	210	9. Virabhadrasana 2	56	34. Viparita Dandasana 1 chair, 2 blankets & 1 bolster (feet against a wall)	221
34. Viparita Dandasana 1 chair, 2 blankets & 1 bolster (feet against a wall)	221	10. Ardha Chandrasana 1 block	178	35. Ustrasana 2 stools, 1 blanket & 2 bolsters	222
35. Ustrasana 2 stools, 1 blanket & 2 bolsters	222	11. Parsvottanasana	64	36. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 blanket, 1 bolster, 2 blocks & 1 belt	226
36. Supta Baddhakonasana 1 blanket, 1 bolster, 2 blocks & 1 belt	226	12. Adhomukha Svanasana 1 bolster	186	37. Supta Virasana 1 blanket & 1 bolster	228
37. Supta Virasana 1 blanket & 1 bolster	228	13. Prasara Padottanasana 1 block or 1 bolster	183	38. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt	224
38. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt	224	14. Uttanasana 1 foam block & 5 wooden blocks	179	39. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt & 1 block	225
39. Supta Padangusthasana 1 belt & 1 block	225	15. Adhomukha Paschimottanasana 1 stool & 2 bolsters	199	40. Salamba Sirsasana against a wall	118
40. Salamba Sirsasana against a wall	118	16. Dandasana 1 blanket & 2 blocks	187	41. Salamba Sarvangasana 1 chair, 1 blanket & 1 bolster	212
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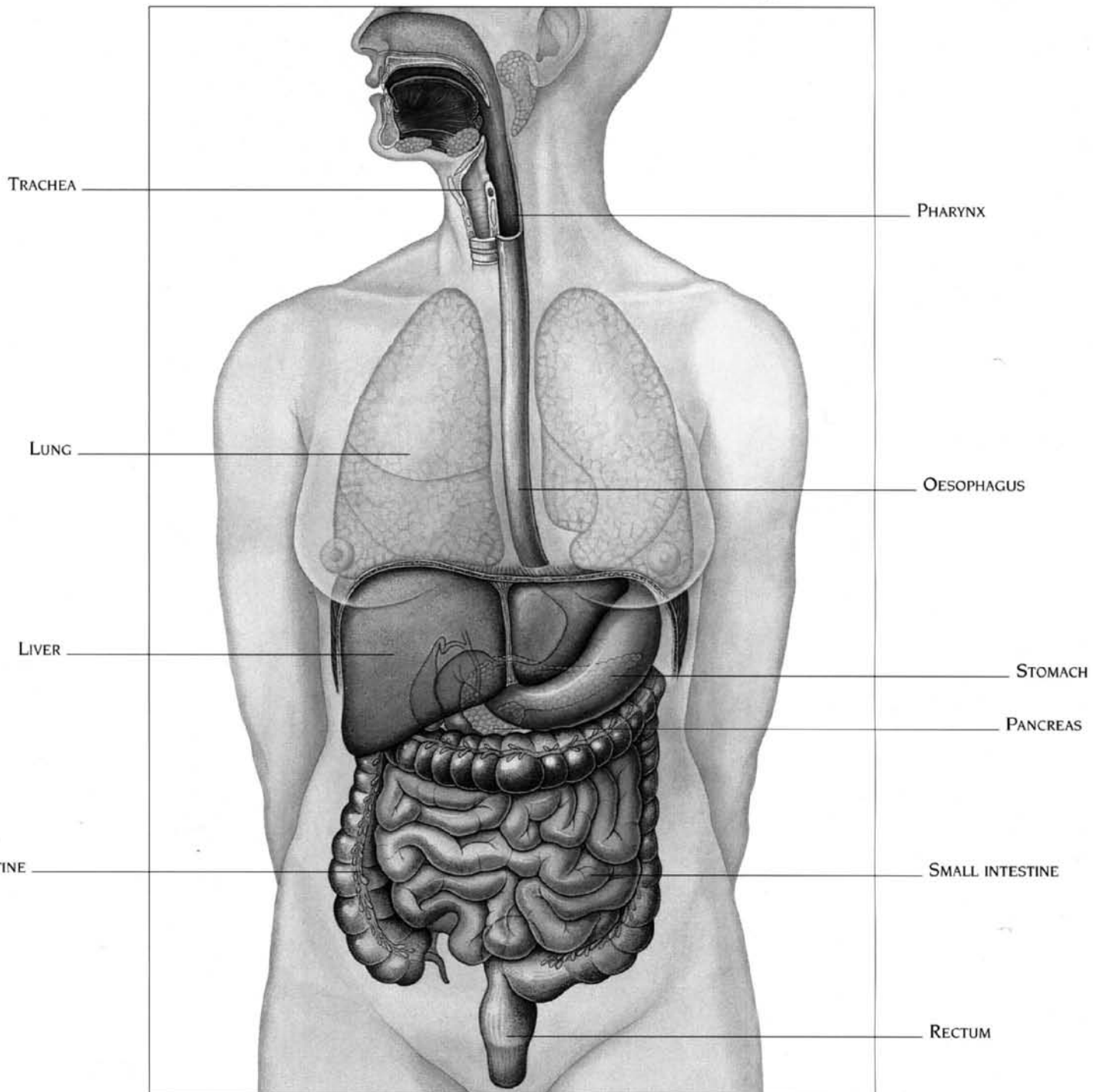


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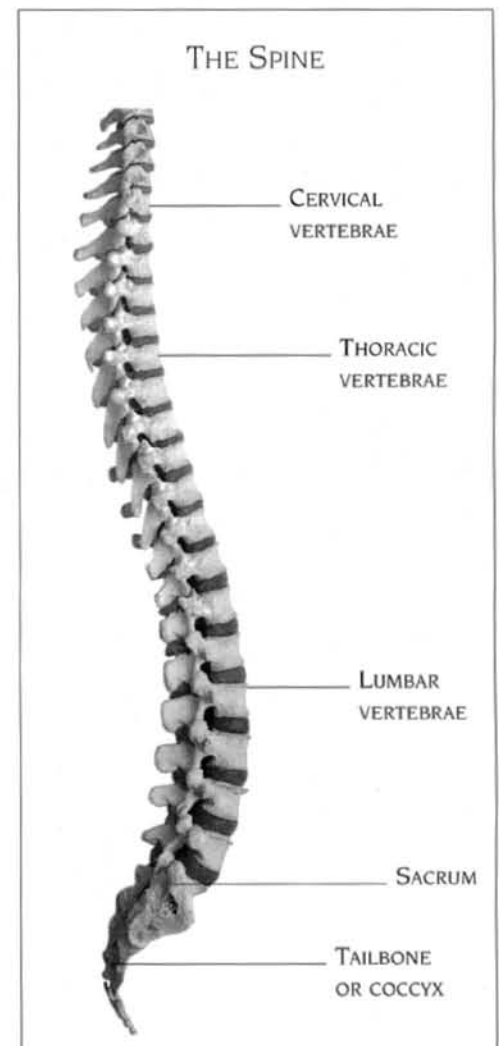
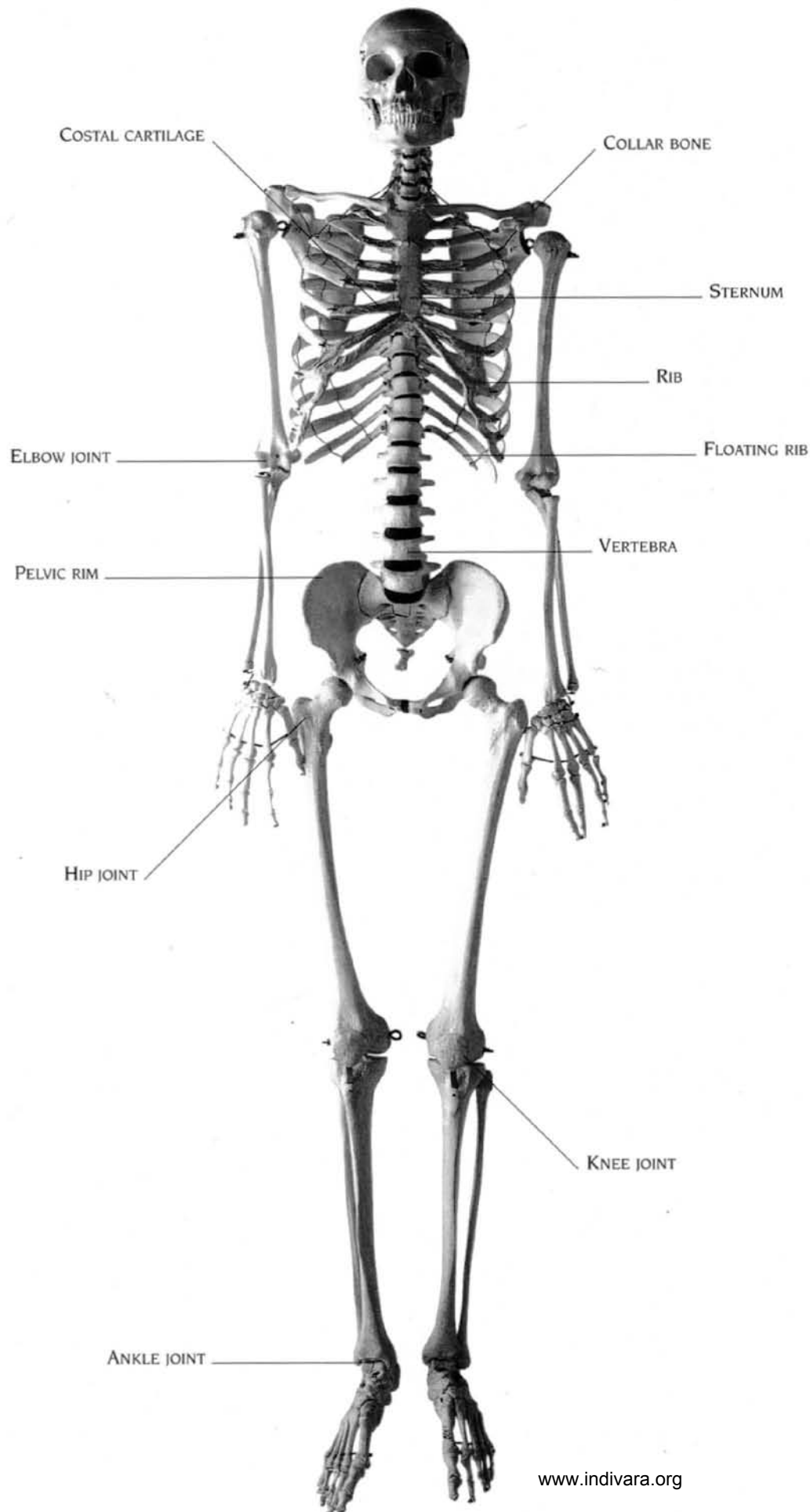
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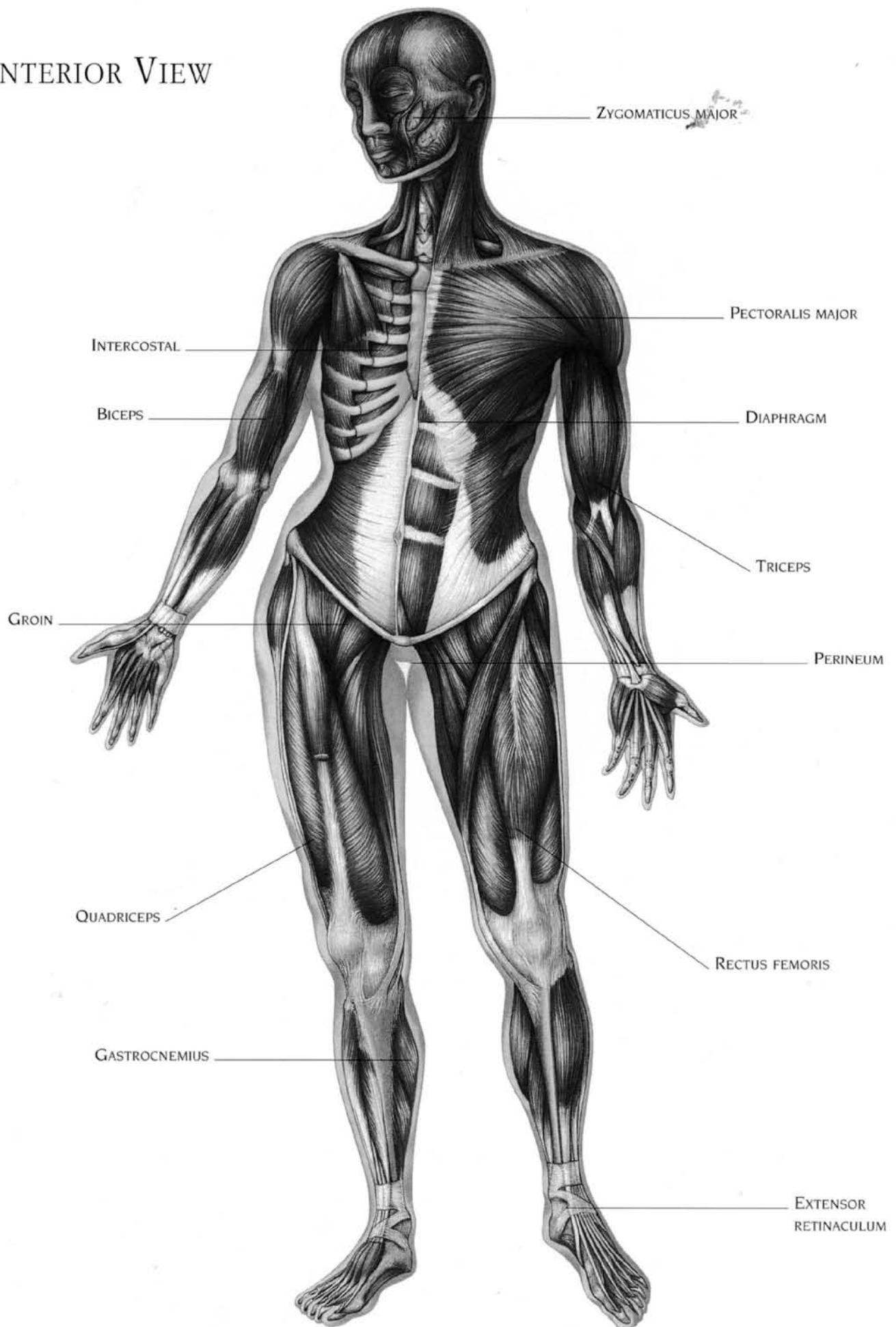


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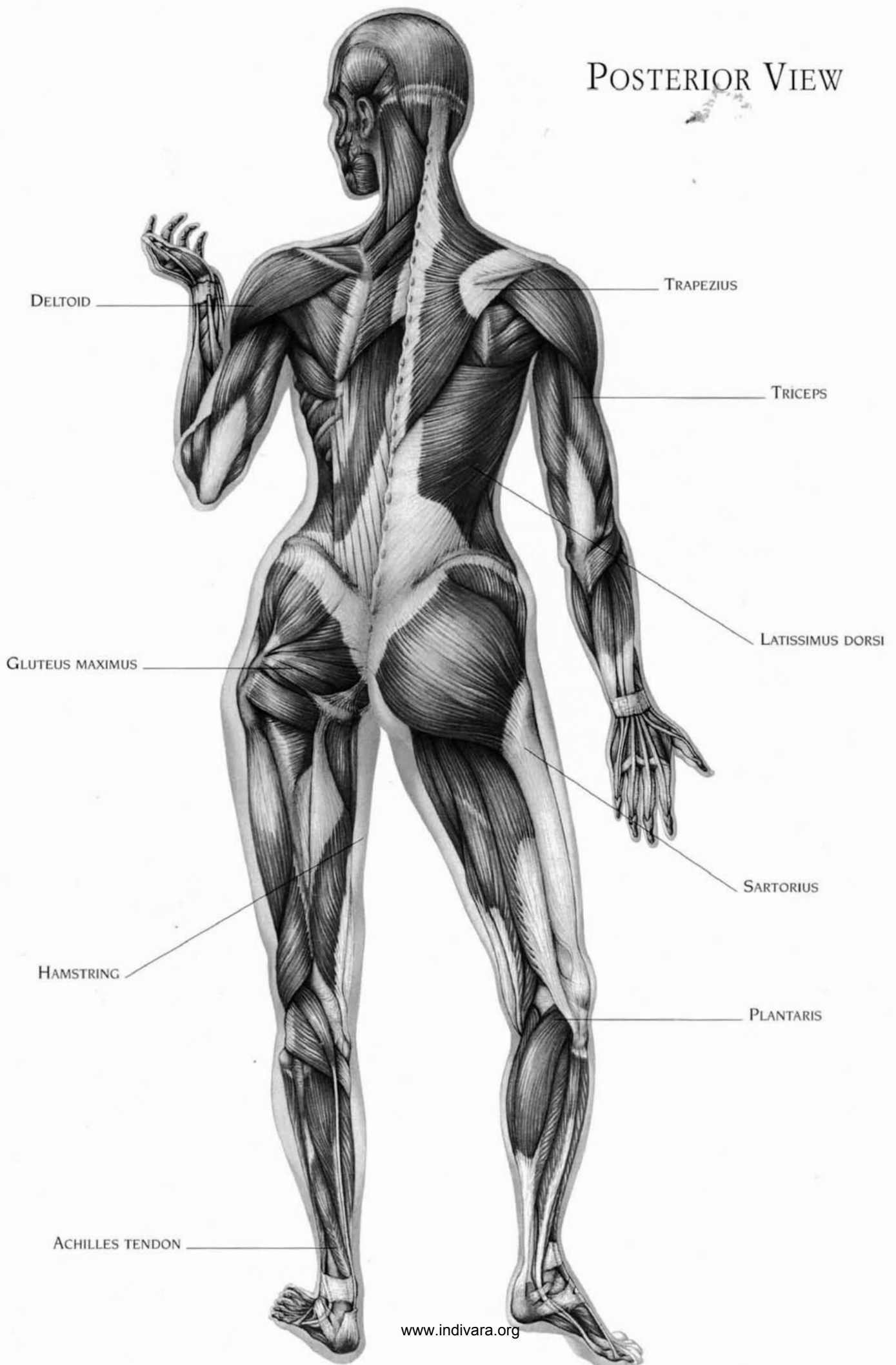


Muscular System

ANTERIOR VIEW



POSTERIOR VIEW



Glossary

Abhyantara inhalation
Ahankara false pride
Ahimsa creed of non-violence
Ajna chakra energy or command chakra
Alabdha bhūmikatva indisposition
Alasya laziness
Anahata chakra spiritual heart chakra
Anandamaya kosha the sheath of bliss, the most important of the 5 sheaths of the body, reached by the practice of yoga
Angamejayatva unsteadiness in the body
Annamaya kosha anatomical sheath, one of 5 sheaths of the body
Antara-kumbhaka suspension of breath with empty lungs
Antaranga-sadhana emotional and mental discipline gained through following the 8 limbs or steps of yoga
Antaratma-sadhana quest for the soul gained through following the 8 limbs or steps of yoga
Anusaswami discipline
Aparigraha freedom from desire
Arambhavastha beginners' stage of yoga, practised at the level of the physical body alone
Asmita egoism
Astanga yoga eight limbs: the steps to self-realization through the practice of yoga
Asteya freedom from avarice
Atman the self or soul
Avirati desire for sensual satisfaction
Ayama expansion or distribution of energy
Bahya exhalation
Bahya-kumbhaka suspension of breath with full lungs
Bahiranga-sadhana one of 3 yogic disciplines, comprising the practice of ethics
Bhakti marg path of love and devotion
Bharadvaja a sage, the father of the warrior Dronacharya
Bharanti darshana false knowledge
Brahmacharya chastity
Buddhi intelligence
Chitta the restraint of consciousness
Chittavritti an imbalance in the mental state
Chakras critical junctions in the body, notionally located along the spine, which, when activated by asanas and pranayama, transform cosmic energy into spiritual energy
Dharana concentration, the sixth limb or step of Astanga yoga
Dhyana freedom from attachments, the seventh stage of the 8 limbs or steps of Astanga yoga
Dronacharya son of the sage Bharadvaja and a major character in the epic, *Mahabharata*
Dorsal region the upper part of the body, relating especially to the back
Dukha misery or pain
Ekagra a focused state of mind
Floating ribs the last 2 pairs of ribs which are not attached to the sternum
Ghatavastha intermediate stage of yoga, when the mind and body learn to move together
Gheranda Samhita text on yoga, written by the

sage Gheranda in the 15th century
Guru teacher; one who hands down a system of knowledge to a disciple
Guru-sishya parampara the tradition of teaching, dating back centuries, of teacher and student
Hatha yoga sighting the soul through the restraint of energy
Hathayoga Pradipika treatise on yoga compiled in the 15th century by the sage Svāmarama
Isvara pranidhana devotion to God
Jivatma the individual self
Jnana marg path of knowledge whereby the seeker learns to discriminate between the real and the unreal
Kaivalya freedom of emancipation
Karma marg path of selfless service without thought of reward
Karana sharira causal body, one of the 3 layers of the body
Karya sharira gross body, one of the 3 layers of the body
Kathopanishad ancient text circa 300-400 BC
Klesha sorrow caused by egoism, desire, ignorance and hatred
Ksipta a distracted mind
Kundalini divine, cosmic energy which is latent in every human being
Kumbhaka retention of energy
Leukorrhoea excessive white vaginal discharge
Manas the mind
Manava (manusya) an intelligent and conscious being
Mahabharata the most ancient of the Indian epics, dating to the first millennium BC
Manipuraka chakra site of the sense of fear and apprehension
Manomaya kosha psychological sheath, one of the 5 sheaths of the body
Marichi a sage, son of Brahma, the creator of the universe
Menorrhagia abnormally heavy or long periods
Metrorrhagia bleeding in-between periods
Mudha a dull, inert mind
Muladhara chakra controls sexual energy
Nadi notional channels which distribute energy from the chakras through the body
Nirbija seedless
Niruddha a controlled and restrained mind
Nispattiyavastha ultimate stage of yoga practice, the state of perfection
Niyama self-restraint
Parmatama the universal self
Parichayavastha third stage of yoga practice, when the intelligence and the body become one
Parigraha possessiveness
Patanjali, a sage, the founder of yoga; believed to have lived sometime between 300 BC-AD 300
Patanjali Yoga Darshana corpus of aphorisms on yoga, compiled between 300 BC-AD 300 and usually attributed to the sage Patanjali
Perineum the area between the thighs, behind the genital organs and in front of the anus
Pramada indifference

Prakriti shakti energy of nature
Prana vital energy or life-force
Pranamaya kosha life-force sheath, one of the 5 sheaths of the body
Pranayama control of energy through breathing
Pratyahara mental detachment from the external world
Psoriasis an ailment leading to dry and scaly patches on the skin
Purusha shakti energy of the soul
Raja yoga sighting the soul through the restraint of consciousness
Rajasic spicy, pungent foods that overstimulate the body and mind
Sahasrara chakra the most important chakra which, when uncoiled, brings the seeker to freedom
Samadhi self-realization
Samsahya doubt
Samayama integration of the body, breath, mind, intellect, and self
Santosha contentment
Sarvaanga sadhana holistic practice which integrates the body, mind and the self
Sattvic natural, organic vegetarian food
Satya truth
Saucha cleanliness
Scoliosis a curved spine
Shakti vital energy and the sense of self, which determine a person's emotions, will power and discrimination
Shvasa-prashvasa uneven respiration or unsteadiness
Styana reluctance to work
Suksma sharira the subtle body, one of the 3 layers of the body
Svadyaya to study one's body, mind, intellect, and ego
Svāmarama sage, author of *Hathayoga Pradipika*
Swadhishtana chakra site of worldly desires
Tamasic food containing meat or alcohol
Tapas austerity gained through the committed practice of yoga
Vijnamaya kosha intellectual sheath, one of the 5 sheaths of the body
Viksipta a scattered, fearful mind
Virabhadra a legendary warrior
Vishuddhi chakra seat of intellectual awareness
Vyadhi physical ailments
Yama ethical codes for daily life
Yoga the path which integrates the body, senses, mind, and the intelligence, with the self
Yogacharya a teacher and a master of yogic traditions
Yoga-agni the fire of yoga which, when lit, ignites the kundalini
Yogabhrastha falling from the grace of yoga
Yoga marg penultimate stage of the journey to self-realization, when the mind and its actions are brought under control
Yoga Sutras a collection of aphorisms on the practice of yoga, attributed to the sage Patanjali
Yogi a student, a seeker of truth

Names of Asanas

NAME	TRANSLATION
Adhomukha Paschimottanasana	Downward-facing intense back stretch
Adhomukha Svanasana	Downward-facing dog stretch
Adhomukha Swastikasana	Downward-facing cross-legged pose
Adhomukha Virasana	Downward-facing hero pose
Ardha Chandrasana	Half moon pose
Baddhakonasana	Fixed angle pose
Bharadvajasana	Torso stretch
Bharadvajasana on a chair	Torso stretch
Dandasana	Staff pose
Halasana	Plough pose
Janu Sirsasana	Head on knee pose
Marichyasana	Torso and leg stretch
Paripurna Navasana	Complete boat pose
Parsva Virasana	Side twist in the hero pose
Parsvottanasana	Intense chest stretch
Paschimottanasana	Intense back stretch
Prasarita Padottanasana	Intense leg stretch
Salamba Sarvangasana	Shoulderstand
Salamba Sirsasana	Headstand
Savasana	Corpse pose
Setubandha Sarvangasana	Bridge pose
Supta Baddhakonasana	Reclining fixed angle pose
Supta Padangusthasana	Reclining leg, foot, and toe stretch
Supta Virasana	Reclining hero pose
Swastikasana	Cross-legged pose
Tadasana	Mountain pose
Tadasana Samasthithi	Steady and firm mountain pose
Tadasana Gomukhasana	Mountain pose with hands held in the shape of a cow's face
Tadasana Paschima Baddha Namaskar	Mountain pose with the arms folded behind the back
Tadasana Paschima Namaskar	Mountain pose with hands folded behind the back
Tadasana Urdhva Baddha Hastasana	Mountain pose with fingers interlocked
Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana	Mountain pose with arms stretched up
Trianga Mukhaikapada Paschimottanasana	Three parts of the body stretch
Ujjayi Pranayama	Conquest of energy
Upavista Konasana	Seated wide-angle pose
Urdhva Dhanurasana	Bow pose
Urdhvamukha Janu Sirsasana	Upward-facing bent knee pose
Ustrasana	Camel pose
Uttanasana	Intense forward stretch
Utthita Marichyasana	Intense torso and leg stretch
Utthita Parsvakonasana	Intense side stretch
Utthita Trikonasana	Extended triangle pose
Viloma 2 Pranayama	Interrupted breathing cycle
Viparita Dandasana	Inverted staff pose
Viparita Karani	Inverted lake pose
Virabhadrasana 1	Warrior pose 1
Virabhadrasana 2	Warrior pose 2
Virasana	Hero pose

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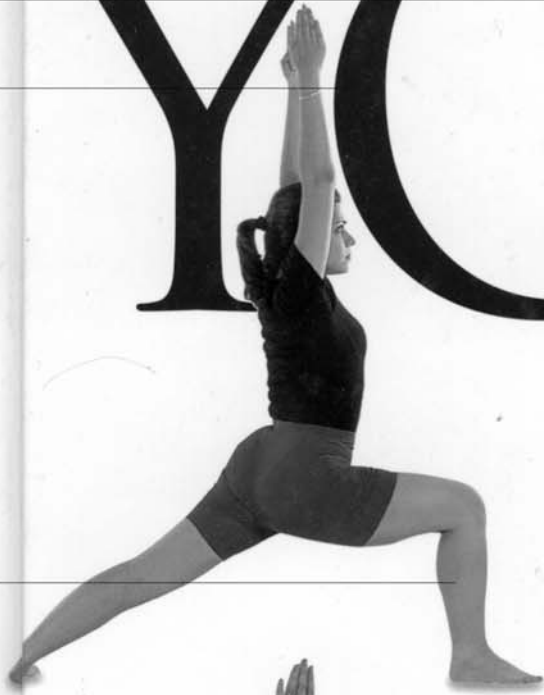
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