

Course Name - Bachelor of Physical Education

Year - IInd (Part-1)

Paper Name - Yoga

Topic Name – Yoga Asana

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Lecture No. – 11

Lecture Title

Yoga Asana Part - 1

Script

PADMASANA

Keeping one foot on the thigh of the other leg and the second foot on the thigh of the first leg is called padmasana.

Padmasana is one of the best asanas for meditation as the body can be completely stable for a long time. In the beginning, sitting in this asana may seem difficult, but with regular practice it is perfected.

Precautions

Preparatory practices are needed to make the hips, knees and ankles flexible before assuming padmasana. The body should be forced into Padmasana if it lacks flexibility. To begin with, only hold the pose for a short time.

Contra-indications

People suffering from sciatica, saral infections or weak or injured knees should not perform this asana. It is not advisable during pregnancy as the circulation in the legs is reduced.

2. Benefits

Padmasana is helpful in achieving physical and mental stability and peace. This is not simply a belief, but a physiological fact.

In Padmasana, pressure is exerted on the lower vertebral column, resulting in relaxation of the nervous system.

The breathing becomes slow, muscular tension is reduced and the blood pressure is lowered.

Physical stability induces mental stability.

Due to the positioning of the feet and the pressure exerted on the thighs, the circulation of blood to the lower limbs is reduced and the blood flow to the abdomen is increased, activating the digestive fire and increasing the appetite.

Ida and pingala are two main nadis located along the vertebral column. Their influence spreads to every part of the body. These nadis have a relationship with the nerves carrying sensory information to the brain, providing knowledge and enabling awareness to arise. While in Padmasana, this process of receiving and acting on sensory input is subdued.

Physiologically, this means that reduced stimulation takes place and there is a state of calmness.

During this process, beta, alpha and theta waves are generated.

Padmasana also facilitates the experience of meditation by directing the flow of prana from mooladhara to sahasrara chakra.

VAJRASANA

Making both thighs hard and strong like vajra, the feet are placed on either side of the anus, and then it becomes vajrasana. This asana provides siddhi (perfection) to yogis.

Technique

Kneel with the knees close together or a little apart if this is not comfortable. Place the feet so that the big toes touch each other and the heels are a little apart. Lower the buttocks so that they rest between the heels on the inside arches of the feet.

Place the hands on the thighs near the knees, with the palm down.

Hold the head upright with the back and neck in one straight line.

Close the eyes

Relax the arms and the whole body

3. Breathing

Breathe normally and fix the attention on the flow of breath passing in and out of the nostrils.

Duration

Practice this asana for atleast five minutes directly after meals to assist digestion. Those with digestive disorders can sit in Vajrasana.

And practise abdominal breathing for 100 breaths before and after meals.

As a mediative asana it can be held for extended periods of time if there are no physical contra-indications applicable.

Contra-indications

Vajrasana is not recommended if suffering from various veins or after the first few months of pregnancy.

Practice note

If there is pain in the thighs, the knees may be separated slightly while maintaining the posture. Beginners may find that their ankles ache after a short time in Vajrasana.

To remedy this, release the posture, sit with the legs stretched forward and shake the feet gently one after the other until the stiffness disappears.

Then resume the posture.

A folded blanket or small cushion may be placed between the buttocks and the heels for added comfort.

4. Benefits

Sage Gheranda considered Vajrasana to be a steady asana suitable for meditation. Vajrasana has been identified as a higher practice in yoga.

Vajrasana also helps to control sexual feelings and redirect the energy towards the development of consciousness.

It is tradition in India to wash the feet of a saint or sage. In some areas, however, such as Maharashtra and in south India, only the big toes are washed, not the whole feet. According to the tradition of these places, energy is emitted from the big toes and whoever receives that energy, in the form of Prasad, is fortunate. There are also many stories in the Puranas relating to the big toes. It is said that the holy Ganges originates from the big toe of Lord Vishnu. This is symbolic of the flow of pure, holy energy which flows from the big toes of the feet.

In this asana the big toes are connected with one another, resulting in the reunion of prana Shakti. A circuit is formed and the prana Shakti flows from one foot to the other, filling the soles of the feet.

The nadis and nerves passing through the front and sides of the feet are lined with the reproductive and digestive systems. When pressure is applied, these nadis are activated and energized, influencing the digestive system and reproductive organs. This increases the efficiency of the entire digestive system, relieving stomach ailments such as hyperacidity and peptic ulcer. For this reason, practising Vajrasana after meal is recommended.

Due to the effect on the gonads located in the lower body, it is also an excellent practice for those observing celibacy.

Vajrasana alters the flow of blood and nervous impulses in the pelvic region and strengthens the pelvic muscles. It is a preventive measure against hernia and also helps to relieve piles.

It reduces the blood flow to the genitals and massages the nerve fibres which feed them, making it useful in the treatment of dilated testicles and hydrocele in men.

Vajrasana can alleviate menstrual disorders.

Practising with the eyes closed and the awareness focused on the breath brings mental peace.

Vajrasana is a useful posture for meditation as it gives support to the spine.

It is the best meditative asana for those suffering from sciatica and sacral problem.

The flow of prana takes place smoothly in this asana.

In kundalini yoga vajrasana is practised for the awakening of sushumnanadi.

It is for this reason that Sage Gheranda says that a yogi attains siddhi, perfection, by doing this asana.

5. Conclusion:

These are helpful in achieving physical and mental stability and peace. This is not simply a belief, but a physiological fact. They also facilitates the experience of meditation by directing the flow of prana from mooladhara to sahasrara chakra. Aasanas also helps to control sexual feelings and redirect the energy towards the development of consciousness. Aasanas reduces the blood flow to the genitals and massages the nerve fibres which feed them, making it useful in the treatment of dilated testicles and hydrosol in men.

Aasanas can alleviate menstrual disorders. These Aasanas leads to improved functioning of the digestive, excretory and reproductive organs and helps to remove gastrointestinal disorders, chronic constipation and sluggishness of the liver. Physical and mental tiredness are removed, the mind will remain peaceful and without worries even in the most difficult situations if the practice of the Aasanas can be mastered. With the practice of the some of asanas like gomukh asana, chakar aasan, maty asaan etc. the expansion of the lungs and deep respiration take place, alleviating disorders such as asthma, bronchitis or kapha dosha imbalances. Youthfulness and vitality are increased by practicing the asanas.

Under expert guidance it is used in the yogic management of sinusitis, bronchitis, constipation, colitis, menstrual disorders, urinary tract disorders and cervical spondylitis, as long as it can be performed without any discomfort. Regular practice of asanas helps to remove excess weight. It stimulates the appetite, alleviates constipation and is beneficial for all the abdominal organs, especially the liver and kidneys.

Preparatory practices are needed to make the hips, knees and ankles flexible before assuming asanas.

Do not practice asanas if suffering from weak heart, high blood pressure. Asanas should not be attempted during pregnancy, menses days. The movement during performing asanas should be with control and care as the body is easily injured by sudden, jerking movements.

The asanas should be practiced with great care and only under expert guidance of a guru.

