



6

ASANAS - II

In the previous lesson you learnt about the different types of Asanas, Standing Asanas; like Tadasana, Ardhakati Chakrasana, Pada Hastasana; Sitting Asanas-Dandasana, Shithila Dandasana, Vajrasana, Usthrasana, Shashankasana.

In this lesson you will learn about Prone Asanas and Supine Asanas.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- demonstrate Prone Asanas- **Makarasana, Bhujangasana** and **Shalabhasana**;
- demonstrate Supine Asanas- **Sarvangasana, Viparitakarani Kriya** and **Supine Relaxation Posture** ; and
- list the benefits of these asanas.

6.1 PRONE ASANAS

Prone Asana Sthiti (Initial) Prone Posture – are done lying face down with the body being supported on the tummy.

- Lie down on the abdomen with legs together, toes pointing outwards, the soles of the feet facing up and chin touching the ground.
- Stretch the hands straight above the head with biceps touching the ears and palms resting on the ground.
- Gently close the eyes.

I. MAKARASANA

Sithila (Relaxation) Prone Posture - .

Makarasna is derived from two words- ‘Makar’ meaning crocodile and ‘Asana’ meaning pose. It is also known as the crocodile-pose.

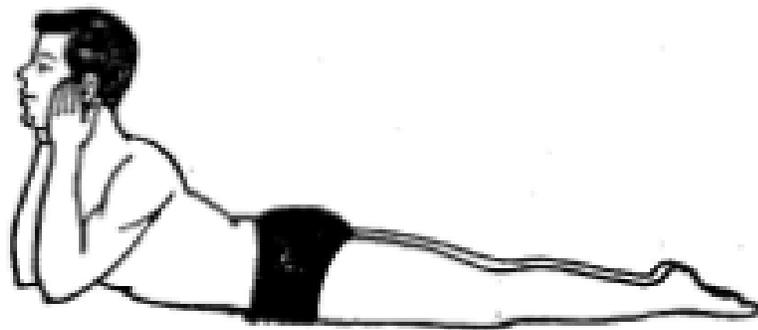


Fig. 6.1



Notes

Practice

- Lie down on the abdomen with feet wide apart, feet touching the ground and soles facing upwards.
- Bend both the elbows and place the right palm on the left shoulder and the left palm on the right shoulder.
- Rest the chin at the point where the fore-arms cross each other.
- Gently close the eyes.

II. BHUJANGASANA

In sanskrit, 'bhujanga' means serpent or snake and 'asana' means pose. This is also known as cobra pose.

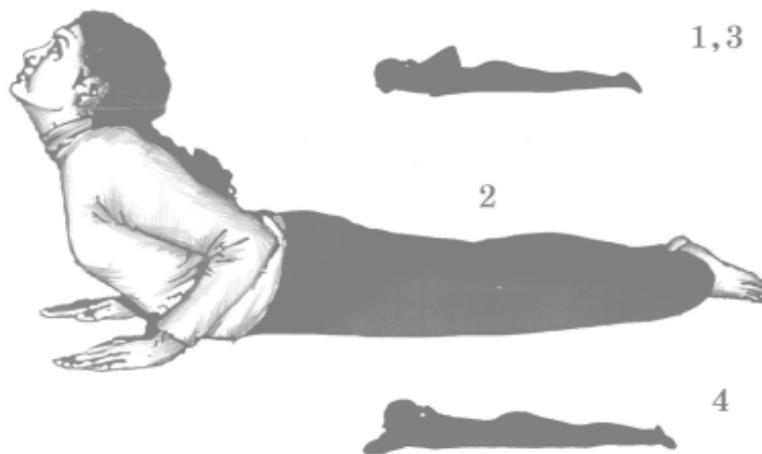


Fig. 6.2



Notes

Practice

- Bend the arms at the elbows and place the palms beside the lower chest at the level of the last rib exerting least pressure on the palms.
- Keep the elbows close to the body and let them not spread out.
- Inhale and come up.
- Arch the dorsal spine and neck backwards as far as you can.
- Keep the body below the navel in touch with the ground.
- Maintain the final position with normal breathing for one minute with least pressure on the palms.
- While exhaling come back to sthiti position.
- Relax in makarásana.

Benefits

- Improves digestion
- Strengthens the arms and shoulders

III. SHALABHASANA

Its name comes from the sanskrit, Salabha, meaning 'locust' or 'grasshopper', and asana, which means 'posture' or 'seat'.

Practice

- Make fists of your palms with the thumbs tucked in and place them under the thighs, with back of the hands facing the ground.
- While inhaling raise both the legs up as far as comfortable without bending the knees. Maintain this position for about one minute with normal breathing.
- Come back to sthiti position while exhaling.

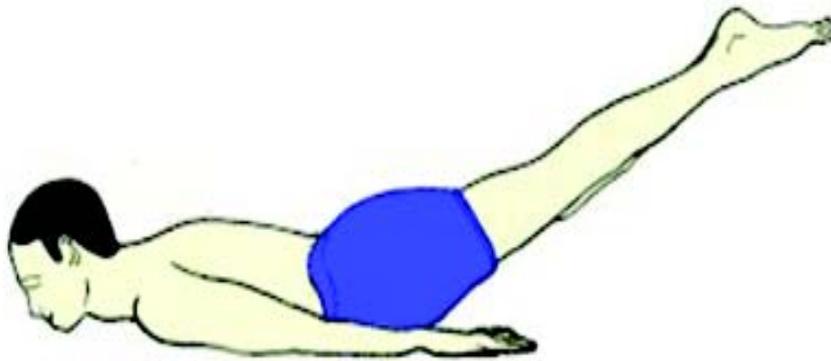
Notes

Fig. 6.3

Benefits

- Improves digestion
- Improves blood circulation



Notes



INTEXT QUESTIONS 6.1

1. Explain Prone Asana?
2. Write the practice method of Makarasana.
3. Write the benefits of Shalabhasana.

6.2 SUPINE ASANAS

Supine Asanas are done lying in a face up position with the body supported by the back.

Sthiti (Initial) for Supine Posture

- Lie down on the back with legs together.
- Stretch the hands straight above the head, biceps touching the ears and the palms facing the ceiling.
- Close the eyes.

II. VIPARITAKARANI KRIYA

The name comes from the sanskrit words viparita, ‘inverted’ or ‘reversed’, and kriya, ‘a particular type of practice’.

Sthiti : Supine Posture

Practice

- Lie on the back. The arms are straight, beside the body.
- Inhaling bend the knees and raise the legs and buttocks.
- Bring the hands under the hips to support the buttocks.

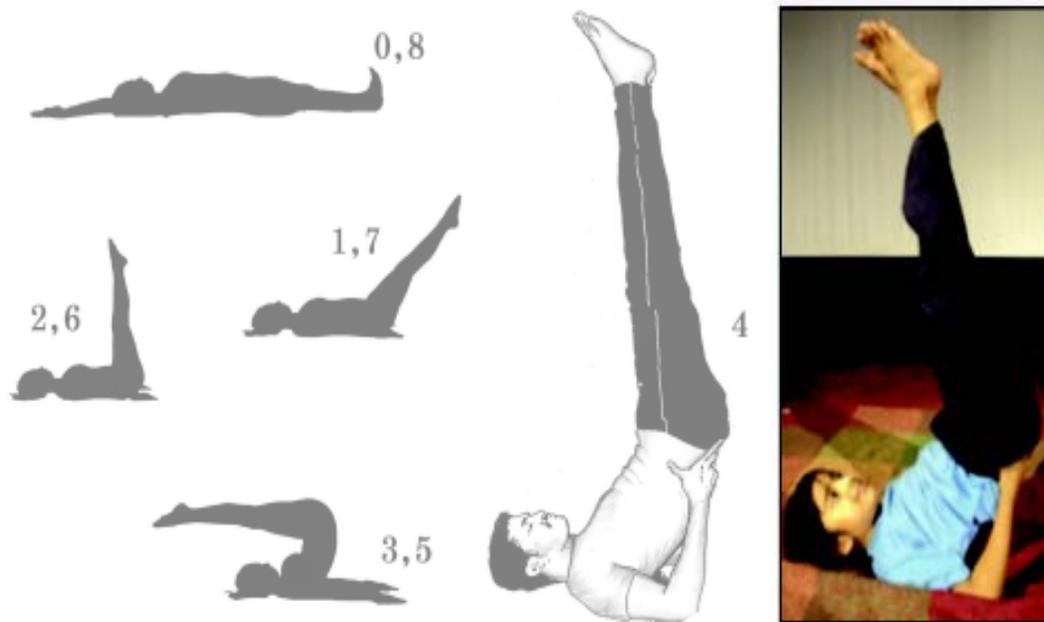


Fig. 6.4

- Keep Elbows on the floor.
- Straighten the legs vertically upwards. Relax the muscles of the feet, legs and hips.
- Breathing normally, remain in this position as long as comfortable.
- Exhale, bend the knees towards the forehead, slowly lower the buttocks and legs, and return to the starting position.

Benefits

- Relieves stress
- Relieves knee pain
- Provides deep relaxation



Notes



Notes

II. SARVANGASANA

In sanskrit, sarva means 'whole' and anga means 'parts of the body' and asana means 'posture'.

Sthiti : Supine Posture

Practice

- Lie on the back.
- Inhaling raise the legs (straight or bent), buttocks and upper body from the floor.
- Support the back with the hands.
- Slowly extend the legs and back fully until the weight of the body rests on the neck, shoulders and upper arms.

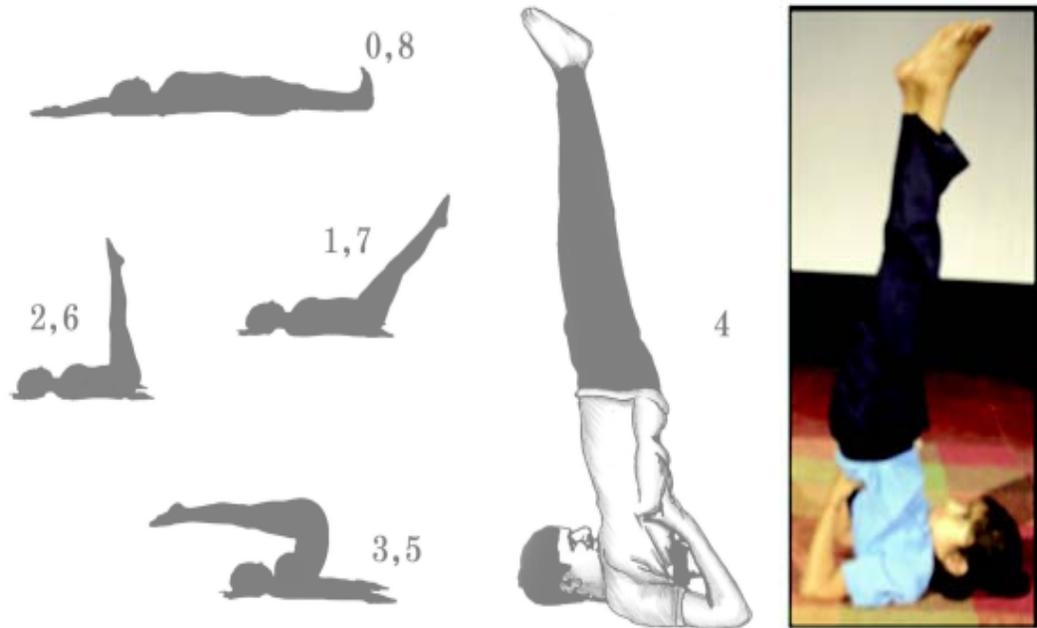


Fig. 6.5



- Let chin touches the chest.
- Back and legs bring as close as possible in a vertical line.
- Breathing normally, remain in this position for 1-5 minutes.
- Exhaling, lower the legs, bring the knees towards the head and slowly return to the starting position.

Benefits

- It purifies blood.
- Regular practice of this yoga pose improves the eye sight and also improves the power of smell.

III. SUPINE RELAXATION POSTURE – SHAVASANA

By remaining motionless for some time and keeping the mind still while you are fully conscious, you learn to relax. This conscious relaxation energises and refreshes both body and mind. But it is much harder to keep the mind than the body still. Therefore, this apparently easy posture is one of the most difficult to master.



Fig. 6.6



Notes

Practice

- Lie flat on the back full length like a corpse. Keep the hands a little away from the thighs, with the palms up.
- Close the eyes. If possible place a black cloth folded four times over the eyes. Keep the heels together and the toes apart.
- Begin by breathing deeply. Later the breathing should be light and slow. There should be no jerky movements to disturb the spine or the body.
- Concentrate on both deep and light exhalations, such that the nostrils do not feel the warmth of breath.
- The lower jaw should hang loose and not be clenched. The tongue should be relaxed, and the pupils of the eyes should be kept completely passive.
- Relax completely and breathe out slowly.
- If the mind wanders, pause without any strain after each slow exhalation.
- Stay in the pose from 15 to 20 minutes.
- One is apt to fall asleep in the beginning. Gradually, when the nerves become passive, one feels completely relaxed and refreshed. In total relaxation stage, one feels energy flow from the back of the head towards the heels. One also feels as if the body is elongated.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 6.2

1. What do you mean by word 'sarva' and 'anga'?
2. Write the procedure of Shavasana.



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

The meaning and procedure of the following Asanas –

- Prone Asanas - Makarasna, Bhujangasana and Shalabhasana.
- Supine Postures - Viparitakarani Kriya, Sarvangasana and Shavasana.
- Benefits of doing the asanas.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Write five points about Bhujangasana.
2. Write the main benefits of Salabhasana?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

6.1

1. Prone Asanas refers to lying face down with body supported on the tummy
2. Lie down on the abdomen with feet wide apart, heels touching the ground and facing each other. Bend both the elbows and place the right palm on the left shoulder and the



Notes



Notes

left palm on the right shoulder. Rest the chin at the point where the fore-arms cross each other, gently close the eyes.

3. Improves digestion and blood circulation

6.2

1. In sanskrit, sarva means 'whole' and anga means 'parts of the body' and asana means 'posture'.
2. Lie flat on the back full length like a corpse. Keep the hands a little away from the thighs, with the palms up, close the eyes, if possible place a black cloth folded four times over the eyes. Keep the heels together and the toes apart, to start with breathe deeply. Later the breathing should be fine and slow, with no jerky movements to disturb the spine or the body. Concentrate on deep and fine exhalations, in which the nostrils do not feel the warmth of breath. The lower jaw should hang loose and not be clenched. The tongue should not be disturbed, and even the pupils of the eyes should be kept completely passive. Relax completely and breathe out slowly, if the mind wanders, pause without any strain after each slow exhalation. Stay in the pose from 15 to 20 minutes.