

# Asana

**Note :** Teach Asanas to students in the order : From easy to difficult. For this, you may follow the order like this : 1. Vajrasana, 2. Bhoo-namanasana, 3. Vakrasana, 4. Pashchimottanasana, 5. Kukkutasana, 6. Yogamudrasana, 7. Dvipadshirasana, 8. Makarasana, 9. Dhanurasana, 10. Padmasarvangasana, 11. Ashtavakrasana, 12. Vrushchikasana, 13. Shavasana.

## 1. Vajrasana

### Meaning

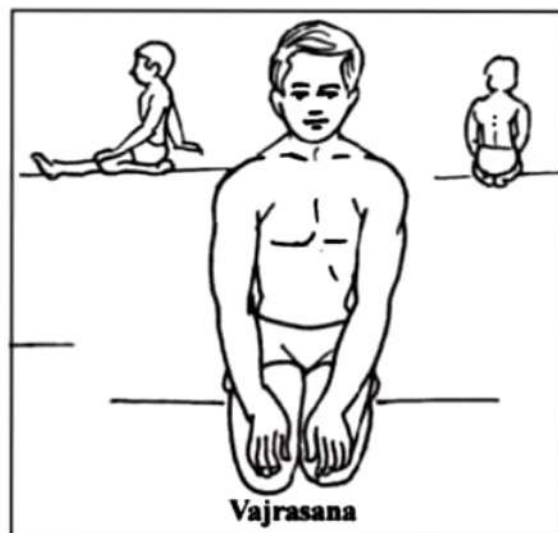
Practice of this asana makes the body as strong as Vajra. Hence this asana is called Vajrasana.

### Original Position

This asana is to be performed in sitting position. Keep both the legs straight facing the front direction, sit straight from the waist, body loose, slow breathing in-out.

### Method

- (1) Go on doing poorak, bend the left leg from the knee and take heel and panja (palm and toes) below the hip.
- (2) Go on doing poorak, bend the right leg also from the knee and take heel and panja (palm and toes) below the hip. Both the heels and big toes would mutually touch.
- (3) Lift the palms of both the hands softly and arrange them close to the knees. Straighten the waist.
- (4) Close your eyes softly. Be in Antarkumbhak for some time. This is the complete position of the asana.
- (5) While doing Rechak come in the original position in reverse order.



### Points to bear in mind

- (1) This is the only asana that can be performed even after lunch.
- (2) Keep the waist straight.
- (3) Bear in mind that panja (palms and toes) may touch each other, but not one leg above the other.

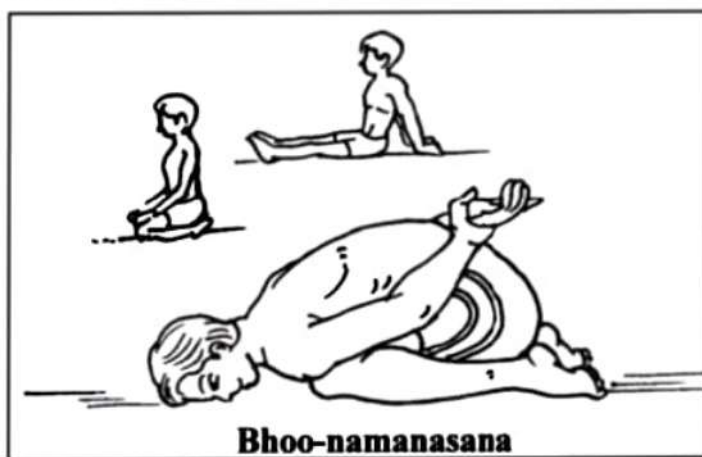
### Benefits

- (1) All the muscles right from palms and toes of legs to waist become very strong.
- (2) Digestion power increases. Capacity of digestive organs also increase.
- (3) The body becomes steady. The mind becomes quiet.
- (4) This asana is useful even for sitting in meditation.

## 2. Bhoo-namanasana

### Meaning

Bhoo-naman means to bow down to the earth. In the complete position of this asana, the position of the body is in the state of bowing down to the earth. Hence this asana is called Bhoo-namanasana.



### Original Position

This asana is to be performed in sitting position. Hence, sit keeping both the legs straight in the original position. Keep both the hands sideways, Palms towards the earth, waist straight, body loose, slow breathing in-out.

### Method

- (1) First of all hold Vajrasana. Do Rechak.
- (2) Do deep breathing - (doing poorak). Take both the hands behind the back and hold the right wrist with the left hand.
- (3) Start bending a head from the waist slowly. Both the hands would come down with the head. Keep breathing out.
- (4) Let the forehead and the nose touch to the earth. This is the complete position of this asana. Be in this position as per capacity.
- (5) While doing poorak slowly, get the body lifted up from the waist. Thus release this asana in the reverse order.

### Points to bear in mind

- (1) While bending in front, bending is to be done from the waist and not through shoulder or stomach.
- (2) While bending in front, hips should not be lifted up.
- (3) Bear in mind that palms and toes may touch each other, but not one leg above the other.
- (4) Women should not perform this asana in pregnant condition.

### Benefits

- (1) The whole body relaxes. The fatigue is removed.
- (2) Organs of the stomach are massaged.
- (3) The spine expands properly. This helps in increasing the height of small children.
- (4) Irritation of the mind relaxes and then it becomes calm and quiet.

## 3. Vakrasana

### Meaning

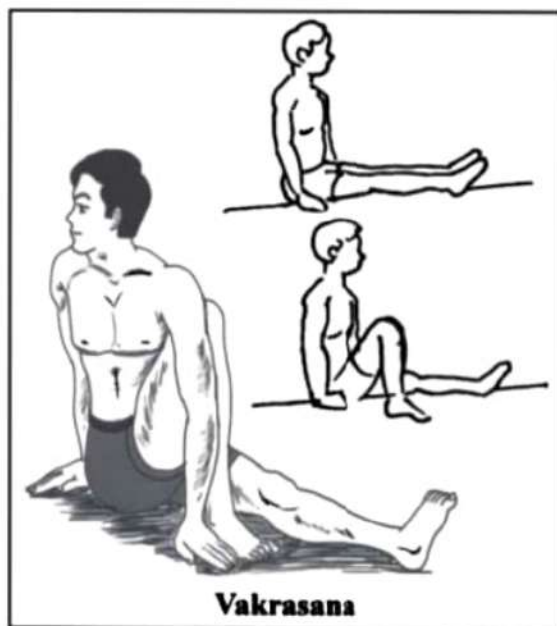
In the complete position of this asana the spine is bent sideward. Hence this asana is called 'Vakrasana'.

### Original Position

This asana is also to be performed in sitting position. Sit with legs straight, knees touching the ground, bend both hands from the elbows and arrange palms on the earth. Palms would be facing the earth. The part of the body above the waist straight and also loose sight in front.

### Method

- (1) While taking in breath bend the right leg from the knee and keep the knee in the above direction and palm and toes in the side of the knee of the left leg.
- (2) Take your right hand behind the back, and arrange so that palm may be on the earth and palm and fingers in the opposite direction of the body.
- (3) Press the left hand with the knee of the right leg and arrange the palm of the left hand in the right of palm and toes of the right leg.





- (4) Bend the body above the waist toward the right side and sit straight from the waist. This is the final position of the asana. Stay in this position according to your capacity. Be in Kumbhak.
- (5) Now come in the original position doing rechak (breathing out)
- (6) Now perform this asana from left side.

#### **Points to bear in mind**

- (1) Perform this asana both ways. Not only that, but keep the time limit and method for both sides all the same.
- (2) Don't put both hands on the earth very far or very near from the body. Keep the distance so that hands naturally reach the limit according to the length of hands.
- (3) Mind well that the body may not bend in front.
- (4) Adequate bending may be given to the spine.
- (5) This asana is a simple form of Ardhamatsyendrasana.

#### **Benefits**

- (1) The spine becomes strong and flexible.
- (2) Fat on the stomach and the waist emanciates.
- (3) Speed of walking becomes energetic and graceful.
- (4) The digestive power becomes strong. It gives relief from diabetes.
- (5) Muscles of the neck and the waist become strong.

### **4. Pashchimottasana**

#### **Meaning**

In this terminology of asana 'Poorva' (East) means upper part of the body from the waist. 'Pashchim' (West) means lower part from the waist upto the legs and 'Uttan' means 'to pull'. Thus the position attained by pulling and carrying the 'Poorva' part (i.e. organs from the waist upto the head) towards Pashchim (lower part from the waist) is called Pashchim + Uttan + asana i.e. Paschimottanasana

#### **Original Position**

This asana is to be performed in the sitting position. Sit keeping both legs straight. Knees touching the earth. Heels and toes of both legs close to one another. Bend the hands from the elbows, arrange both palms towards earth in side of both legs. Fingers of hands close to one another. The upper part of the body above the waist straight and loose. Keep sight in front.

#### **Method**

- (1) While doing poorak, lift both hands towards the head. Both hands straight and parallel mutually. Fingers pointing to the sky. Keep all the fingers touching one another.



- (2) While doing rechak slowly keep both hands straight on both sides of the head, bend forward from the waist. Both hands and upper part above the waist will come in front simultaneously.
- (3) When both hands become parallel to legs stretch the waist a little towards front side.
- (4) Keep bending forward. Bend forefingers of both hands, a little hold the big toes of the relative legs. In this position it is desirable that the knees touch the earth.
- (5) Keeping bending from the waist in this position, take head towards the knee.
- (6) Continue in this position as per capacity with normal breathing.
- (7) While doing poorak slowly, bring both hands also in the original position, keep the body loose.

#### **Points to bear in mind**

- (1) Don't perform this asana with a jerk. Progress can be slowly and patiently only.
- (2) While touching knees with head bear in mind that knees may not be lifted up.
- (3) Pregnant women and sciatica patients should not perform this asana.
- (4) Performing Janushirasana and exercise of the waist before this asana will help doing this asana easily.

#### **Benefits**

- (1) Capacity of the organs of the stomach increases. Constipation is removed. Fat of the stomach decreases.
- (2) Massage to the pancreas gives relief in diabetes.
- (3) Flexibility and strength of the spine as well as muscles giving support increases.
- (4) Capacity of the nerves of the back increases.
- (5) It gives relief in the problems pertaining to reproduction-organs.
- (6) After this asana is accomplished with proficiency, uddiyan bandh and nauli kriya become easy to perform.
- (7) It helps also in the spiritual progress.

### **5. Kukkutasana**

#### **Meaning**

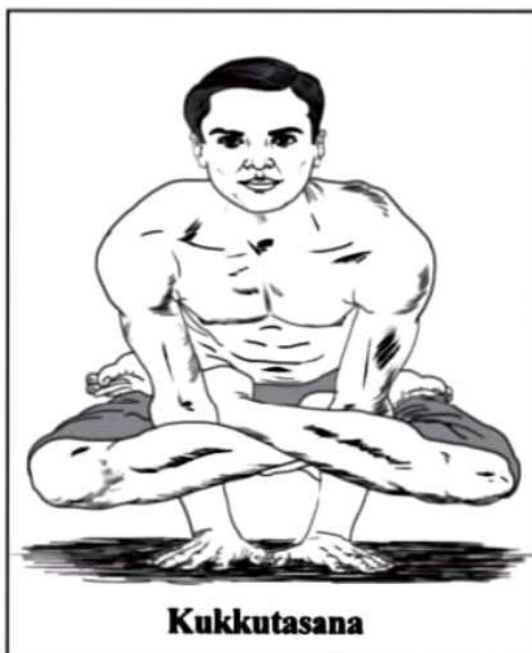
Kukkuta means cock (Kukado). In the complete position of this asana the shape of the body becomes like a Kukado (cock). Hence it is called Kukkutasana.

#### **Original Position**

This asana is also to be performed in the sitting position. Sit with both legs straight. Both hands on side. The body above the waist straight. Nevertheless loose sight in front.

#### **Method**

- (1) First of all come in Padmasana position from the original position.
- (2) Getting right hand passed inbetween calf of the right leg and thigh and left hand passed inbetween calf of the left hand and thigh arrange palms and fingers of both hands on the earth.
- (3) Lift the body as high as possible with the strength of hands keeping normal breathing.



**Kukkutasana**



- (4) Be in this position for some time and then bring the body below slowly and patiently.
- (5) Come in the original position and release the body loose.

#### **Points to bear in mind**

- (1) Legs should be raised high from the ground to the knees.
- (2) Mind well that the body may not struck while coming down.
- (3) Bend a little forward from the waist. Don't keep utterly straight but don't bend too much.

#### **Benefits**

- (1) Muscles of hands, chest, arm, and shoulders become strong.
- (2) Fat on the thigh gets reduced and thighs become shapely.
- (3) In case of women there is relief in diseases pertaining to the breast.
- (4) Capacity of the intestine increases. As a result, the digestive power increases.
- (5) It is beneficial in diseases like constipation, gas, piles.

### **6. Yogamudrasana**

#### **Meaning**

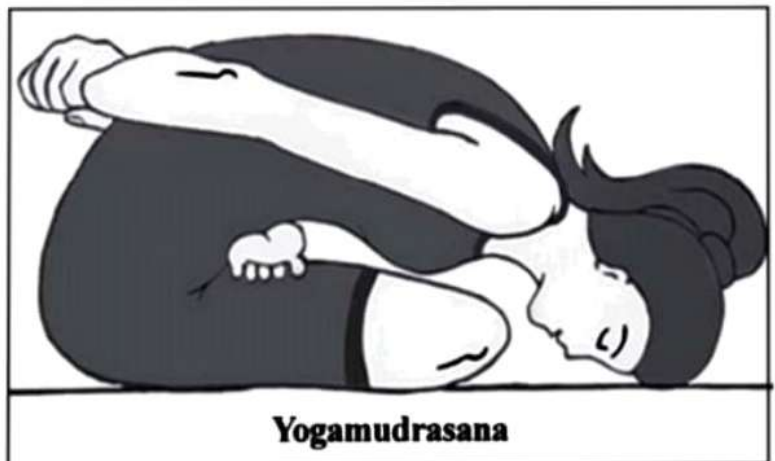
There are two words in Yogamudrasana : Yogamudra and asana. In fact this asana is prevalent as one mudra. Hence it is called Yogamudrasana.

#### **Original Position**

This asana is to be done in the sitting position. Sit keeping both legs straight. Knees touching ground. Heels and big toes of both legs close to one another. Bend hands from elbows. Both palms in the side of both legs, and on the ground. Fingers of hands mutually, close to one another. The body above the waist straight and loose sight in front.

#### **Method**

- (1) First of all hold Padmasana.
- (2) Take a deep breath (Do Poorak). Take both hands behind the back. Hold wrist of right hand with left hand.
- (3) Retain your breath (in the Kumbhak condition). Get the chin touch Kanthkoop. (Perform Jalandhar bandh)
- (4) While doing Rechak slowly go on bending forward from the waist. Let the forehead and nose touch to the ground. Be in normal breathing for some time in this position. This position is the complete position of the asana.
- (5) While doing poorak come again in the original position.
- (6) Do rechak and release the body loose slowly.



#### **Points to bear in mind**

- (1) At the time of bending forward, mind well that part of hip may not lift up from the ground.
- (2) At the time of bending forward, bend from the waist and not from stomach or shoulders.

- (3) Mind well the action of Poorak, Kumbhak and Rechak while performing asana.
- (4) Keep chin touched with chest or in the Kanthkoop.
- (5) Sustain in the complete position as per capacity, not forcibly.

#### **Benefits**

- (1) Muscles of the stomach are pressed. So fatness of the stomach decreases. The stomach stops getting fatty.
- (2) Activates appetite. The digestion power increases.
- (3) Constipation and indigestion get cured.
- (4) Due to the muscles of the waist and the hip being stretched, one gets relief in aching (pain) of the waist and the hip.

### **7. Dwipadshirasana**

#### **Meaning**

'Dwi' means Two, 'Pad' means legs and 'Shir' means head. Thus, In the complete position of this asana both legs and head are close to one another. So this asana is called Dwipadshirasana.

#### **Original Position**

This asana is also to be performed in sitting position. Both legs straight and towards in front, the waist straight, both hands on sides. Keep slow breathing and sight in front. This is the original position.

#### **Method**

- (1) While doing poorak bend the left leg from the knee and put it on the neck by getting it moved from the left shoulder.
- (2) Now bend the right leg also from the knee and put it on the neck by getting it moved from the right shoulder. Heels of both the legs would be on the neck one above other.
- (3) Make Namaskarmudra with both hands. Be in this position as per capacity, with Antarkumbhak.
- (4) While performing Rechak leave the asana in the reverse order.

#### **Points to bear in mind**

- (1) This is rather a difficult asana. Hence practice this asana after body becomes adequately flexible.
- (2) In the beginning take the help of some guide or helper.
- (3) It should not be done forcibly. Don't perform if any problem of spondilitis of the neck is there.
- (4) In the beginning instead of the complete position of the asana, perform it rather with one or the other leg turn by turn.

#### **Benefits**

- (1) All muscles of the legs become strong and flexible.
- (2) Muscles of the back become strong.
- (3) Muscles of shoulders and neck develop.
- (4) The spine also becomes flexible and strong.
- (5) The Tolerance-power develops.





## 8. Makarasana

### Meaning

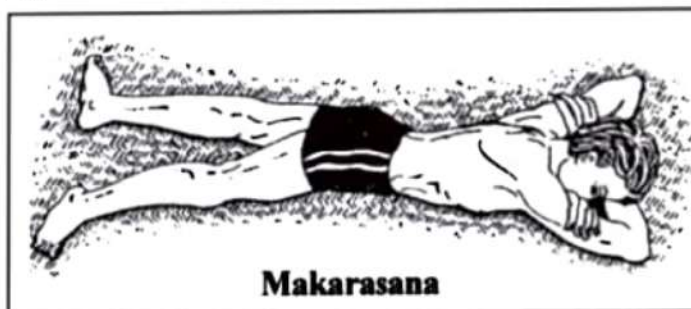
'Makar' means crocodile. In this asana, the shape of the body becomes like a crocodile. Hence it is called Makarasana.

### Original Position

This asana is to be performed by lying on the stomach. In the original position lie on the stomach. Keep both hands sideways. The neck can be kept in convenient direction, left or right.

### Method

- (1) While performing poorak slowly, bend both hands from the elbows and take both hands to the head one after the other. Arrange the palms one above the other in inverse position. Broaden both legs, palms and toes towards outside, heels inside. Keep a distance of about one foot inbetween the two legs.
- (2) While doing Rechak, arrange the forehead on the palms. Relax the whole body absolutely from stress and strain. This is the complete position of this asana. Be in this asana for some time with very slow but deep breath.
- (3) Leave the asana in reverse order.
- (4) As an optimal method bend both hands from the elbows, keep hands in erect position, palms may touch mutually from the wrists towards the sky, making stand. The chin can be leant on it.



### Points to bear in mind

- (1) Pregnant women should not do this asana.
- (2) This asana is mainly for relaxation.
- (3) Mind well that the chest does not experience any pressure.
- (4) Mind well that big toes of the legs and the knees remain in touch with the ground.

### Benefits

- (1) The whole body gets rest and relaxation.
- (2) The breathing capacity increases. Organs of the stomach get massage.
- (3) The mind become calm and quiet. Irritation decreases.

## 9. Dhanurasana

### Meaning

In this asana the shape of the body becomes like a bow. Hence it is called Dhanurasana.

### Original Position

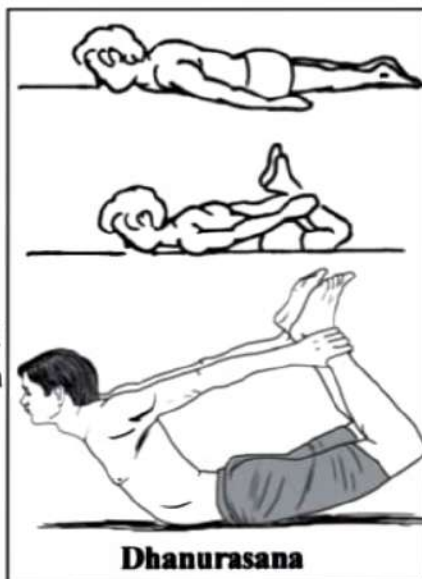
This asana is to be performed by lying on the stomach. First of all lie on the stomach, keep both hands at their own place on the side of the body. Keep the body loose and breathing slow.

### Method

- (1) Bend both legs from the knees and bring them towards the back. Hold with both hands, both legs near ankles.
- (2) While doing poorak, uplift the part in front from the head to the chest and navel. Alongwith it, from the rear, lift legs also from the thigh.
- (3) Lift up the trunk of the body as much as possible. Lift up the thighs also as per capacity. Do kumbhak as per capacity. Be in this position for some time.
- (4) While doing Rechak, bring the body in the original position.

### Points to bear in Mind

- (1) Persons whose heart and lungs are weak should not perform this asana.
- (2) Persons suffering from illness like swelling on liver and in testine or high B.P. should not do this asana.
- (3) Legs are to be lifted from the root of the thighs. Mind that only knees are bent and the thighs may not be on the ground.
- (4) Returning to the original position, first put the trunk and the thigh on the ground. Then only, leave the gripping of the hands.



### Benefits

- (1) Organs of the stomach become strong. Blood circulation in the belly-region becomes orderly.
- (2) The spine gets exercise, so its flexibility increases.
- (3) The fat on the stomach and the thighs is reduced and the body becomes shapely.
- (4) Muscles of the back become strong, shoulders and arms become strong, shoulders are broaden due to its prolonged practice.
- (5) It benefits in illness pertaining to uterus (womb) and ovary.

## 10. Padmasarvangasana

### Meaning

This asana is a joint asana of Padmasana and Sarvangasana. Hence it is called Padmasarvangasana. Both legs are in Padmasana position, while part of the body right from head to the waist is in the Sarvangasana position.

### Original Position

This asana is to be performed lying on the back. Lie on the back, both hands on the side parallel to the body; palms towards to ground.

### Method

- (1) Lie on the back and let loose the body, keep both hands on side near the body and parallel.
- (2) Now while doing 'poorak' slowly and patiently lift both legs simultaneously keeping them in erect position.
- (3) Again go on lifting legs more and more slowly keeping them close to each other. Stop for a while. While they are at an angle of 90° retain breath also.
- (4) Now while performing 'rechak', bend the legs towards the head, so that the waist is lifted automatically.



- (5) Now support the waist with both hands. Make part of the body erect from the waist to the shoulder, so that the body from legs to shoulders may remain erect, but make a right angle with the neck. This position is called Sarvangasana. Stay in this position for some time.
- (6) Now bend the left leg from the knee. Arrange the heel in the root of the right thigh.
- (7) In the same way bend the right leg also from the knee. Arrange the heel in the root of the left thigh.  
This is the position of the Padmasana. This is the complete position of Padmasarvangasana. Stay in this position with normal breathing as per capacity.
- (8) For releasing the asana, first of all make the right leg erect. Then make the left leg erect.
- (9) Bring down slowly the part from shoulders to the waist towards to the ground.
- (10) Bend both legs from knees, and put legs on the ground softly.
- (11) Come in the original position by making both legs erect from the knees.



#### **Points to bear in mind**

- (1) The person whose thyroid gland has swollen or has any problem with the heart should not perform this asana.
- (2) Very fatty person also should not do this asana.
- (3) While lifting legs, don't give any jerk to the waist. In the same way while returning, also take care that they are not "thrown" on the ground uncontrolled.

#### **Benefits**

- (1) All the organs of the body get exercise.
- (2) It is specially beneficial in the problem of the thyroid.
- (3) Vertebrae of the spine get blood in adequate proportion.
- (4) It activates the nervous system.
- (5) It stops increase (growth) in the liver and the spleen.
- (6) Efficiency of the brain increases in getting the adequate blood supply.

### **11. Ashtavakrasana**

#### **Meaning**

This asana is getting bending from eight places of the body. So it is called Ashtavakrasana.

#### **Original Position**

This asana is amongst one of them required to be performed in sitting position. Sit in the original position, by extending both legs in relaxed state. Both hands in side of both legs, close to the body in a way that the palms touch to the ground. Keep the body loose with slow breathing.

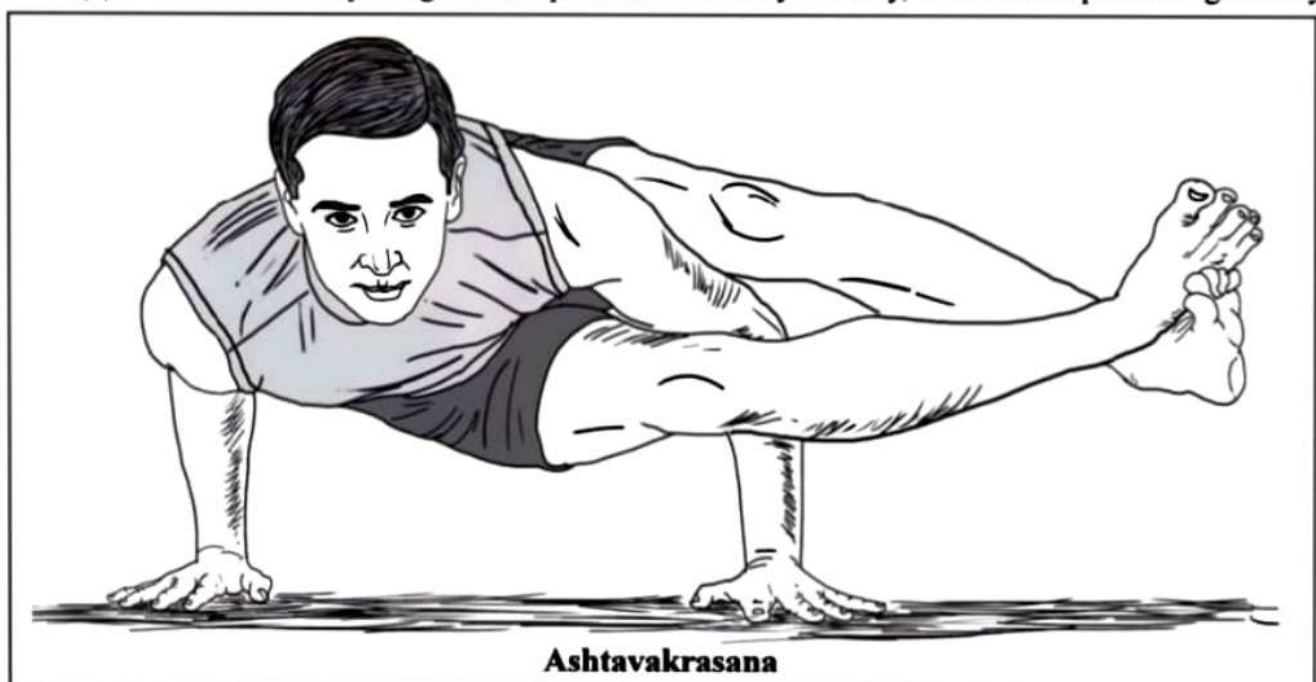
#### **Method**

- (1) Bend left leg from the knee. Take the left-leg upside from joint of thigh and pull it on left shoulder level.
- (2) Keep knee on the left shoulder level and make the leg straight in front.
- (3) Take support on the ground with the help of both palms.

- (4) Take the right leg slowly on to the left leg such that tangle of the leg may be in the part of the ankles. In this position your left hand would be inbetween two thighs.
- (5) Now bend forward from the waist. The left leg would then move from shoulder to ankle.
- (6) Lift the body up, slowly with the support of both hands. In this position the weight of whole body would be only on both palms. Right leg would be bent a little backward from knee. This is the complete position of Ashtavakrasana. In this position stay for a while with normal breathing. Then release the asana slowly and patiently in the reverse order. Again repeat the same process with left leg and attain the complete position of the asana.

#### **Points to bear in Mind**

- (1) This is rather a difficult asana. Hence after completing the practice of the remaining asana and the body becoming loose adequately, then you may practice this asana.
- (2) Instead of completing the complete asana in only one day, it should be practised gradually.



#### **Benefits**

- (1) Muscles of the wrists, arms and shoulders become strong.
- (2) Muscles of the stomach and lower part of the abdomen become strong.
- (3) As the spine gets more blood supply, it becomes more flexible and strong.
- (4) Toxic substances of the body get rid of.
- (5) The feeling of balance develops.

#### **12. Vrushchikasana**

##### **Meaning**

In the complete position of the asana the shape of the body becomes like a scorpion (Vrushchik), hence this asana is called Vrushchikasana.

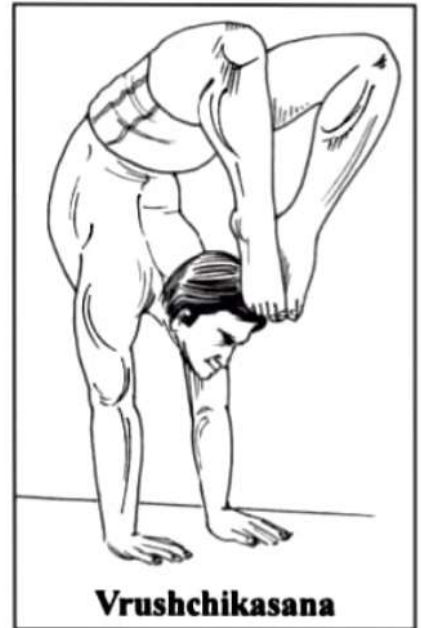
##### **Original Position**

This asana can be performed in many ways. Here we would describe it with the Shirshasana-method. Hence in the original position lie on the stomach. Keep both hands beside the body at proper place.



## Method

- (1) Take both hands slowly towards the head. Keep them parallel to shoulders.
- (2) Lift the body right from the head to the waist with the support of hand. So Palms and toes of the legs would be on the ground. In this position the state of the body would be like 'Parvatasana.'
- (3) Now lift up the body right from shoulders to thigh with the strength of both hands. Keep legs bent from knees.
- (4) Make legs straight from the knees. In this position the whole body would be straight with the support of both hands.
- (5) Now lift up the head slowly from the neck, so that your sight would be in front. Shoulders would be above the ground and both arms would be straight.
- (6) Now go on bending the waist backside.
- (7) Bring down palms and toes of the legs and put them on the head passing through shoulders.
- (8) This is the final position. Stay in this position for some time with normal breathing.
- (9) For coming back, first of all keep legs bent from the knees and take them upwards. Make the waist straight.
- (10) Keep legs straight and bend in front. Then come again in the Parvatasana position.
- (11) Keep the body softly on the ground and come in the Makarasana position.



## Points to bear in Mind

- (1) Persons suffering from ear-ache, High B. P., old hardened constipation should not do this asana.
- (2) This asana should be performed after practising other asana and attaining skill in Shirshasana.
- (3) After doing this asana, perform Shavasana twice.
- (4) Breathe with nose only. Mind well that you have not to breathe with mouth even through mistake.
- (5) This is rather a difficult asana. Hence in the beginning only after practising for long Shirshasana, Vyaghrasana, Chakrasana, you can perform this asana easily. In the beginning support of wall or some other support can be taken.

## Benefits

- (1) Hands and arms become strong.
- (2) Fat of the thigh is reduced and the body becomes shapely.
- (3) It benefits in illness pertaining to uterus and ovary of woman.
- (4) Number (weak vision) of eyes get reduced.
- (5) It has good effect on all of hormonal glands and hence long youth-period is attained.

## 13. Shavasana

### Meaning

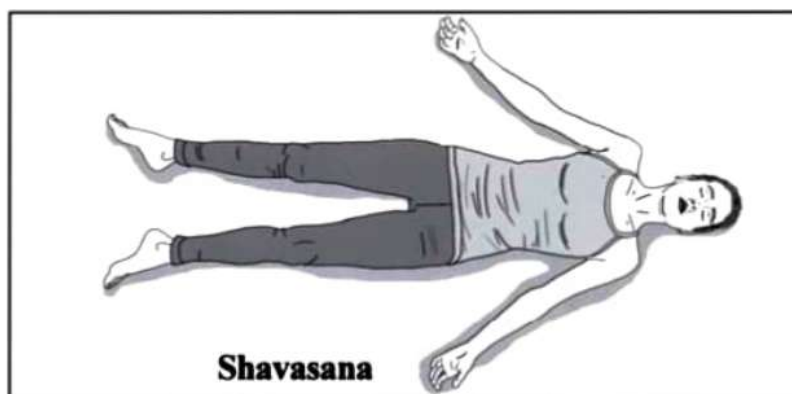
'Shava' means dead-body. In this asana, the body is to be loosened like a dead body with very slow or negligible breathing. Hence it is called Shavasana.

### Original Position

This asana is to be done lying on the back. Hence, to lie on the back is the original position.

### Method

- (1) Lie on the back. Broaden both legs so that palms and toes of legs remain outside and heels remain inside. Keep a distance of about one to one and half foot i.e. adequate distance inbetween.



- (2) Keep both hands slight away from the body. Keep fingers loose and bent a little.
- (3) Keep legs also loose, so that there is some bending near the knee.
- (4) Release muscles of the neck loose. Keep the head right, left or straight according to convenience.
- (5) Go on making loose all the organs of the body in successive order right from big toes of legs, toes, fingers palms and toes, ankles, calves (of legs), knees, thighs muscles of the waist, muscles of the stomach, muscles of the chest, fingers of both the hands, wrists, arms, shoulders and neck.
- (6) Make loose the muscles of the face. For this type of loosening give autosuggestions with awareness.
- (7) Observe the whole body with feeling of peace. Neutral observation would make the body tension free slowly.
- (8) Now observe breathing without any effort to make the breath long or short only observe. This would make the breath automatically slow.
- (9) Now make the breath proportionate and regular. This would remove minute tensions.
- (10) Now elongate more poorak-rechak, perform deep breathing. This would remove tension from both the body and the mind. Both (body and mind) would become calm and quiet.
- (11) After practising this asana for long, thoughts also would become peaceful. A stage of thoughtlessness also can be attained. This position is the complete position of Shavasana.
- (12) Stay in this position for some time and then release yourself gradually from the asana. Come in the original position.

#### **Points to bear in Mind**

- (1) Shavasana is to be done with awareness.
- (2) Take care not to sleep. Of course no harm with the sleep, but then, the objective of the Shavasana is not achieved.
- (3) To lie on the back only is not Shavasana, but it is essential that the body, breath and the mind become tension free.
- (4) The Shavasana is a basic asana. Hence during practice of asanas, Shavasana should be done after two-three asana can be done in between, so that this asana can be done very well, in tension free state attained through Shavasana.

#### **Benefits**

- (1) Exertion of the body gets removed and it relaxes.
- (2) The nervous system becomes efficient.
- (3) Mental tension gets removed. The mind experiences peace.
- (4) Concentration of the mind increases.