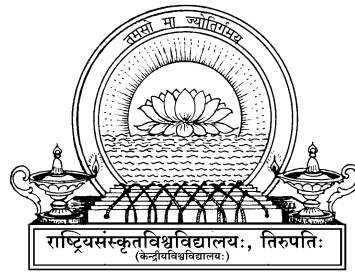


SHASTRI HONOURS / B.A HONOURS

1st Semester, Course-1

**Skill Enhancement Course
(SEC-1)**

YOGA & MEDITATION



आरादन्तर्जालीयविद्यानिकेतः

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE & ONLINE EDUCATION

राष्ट्रीयसंस्कृतविश्वविद्यालयः तिरुपतिः - ५१७ ५०७

NATIONAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, TIRUPATI -517 507

CHIEF EDITOR

Prof.G.S.R.Krishna Murthy

Vice-Chancellor

National Sanskrit University

Tirupati

GENERAL EDITOR

Prof.C. Ranganathan

Director

CDOE – N.S.University,

National Sanskrit University

Tirupati.

Addl.GENERAL EDITOR

Dr. Bharat Bhusan Rath

Deputy Director,

CDOE – N.S.University,

Tirupati.

PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR

Dr.Niranjana Mishra

Associate Professor

& Head of the Department

Dept. of Vedabhashyam NSU, TPT.

SUBJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Prof.R.J.Ramasree

National Sanskrit University

Tirupati.

COURSE WRITER

CDOE

N.S.University,

Tirupati.

SUPERVISING

Dr.M.K.Suneetha

PAGE SETTING

Prasad Naik Dungavath

2nd Print : 2024

©PUBLISHED BY

आरादन्तर्जालीयविद्यानिकेतः

CENTER OF DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION

राष्ट्रीयसंस्कृतविश्वविद्यालयः तिरुपतिः - ५१७ ५०७

NATIONAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, TIRUPATI – 517 507.

UNIT-1

Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objective
- 1.3 Asanas: Meaning, Definition, Types and Classification
- 1.4 Number and Types of asanas
- 1.5 Methods And Benefits Of Asnas
 - 1.5.1 Swasthikasana
 - 1.5.2 Gomukhasana
 - 1.5.3 Veerasana
 - 1.5.4 Koormasana
 - 1.5.5 Kukkutasana
 - 1.5.6 Uttanakoormasana
 - 1.5.7. Dhanurasana
 - 1.5.8 Savasana.
- 1.6 Therapeutic Concepts of Asana
- 1.7 Summing Up
- 1.8 Questions

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Maharshi Patanjali was the founder of Yoga Philosophy. The Yoga sutras of Maharshi Patanjali defined Yoga as the cessation of modifications of chitta. Through Practice and Detachment one can attain the state of Yoga as it is said अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः। Maharshi Patanjali introduced a special practices i.e., Ashtangayoga practices through which yoga sadhaka is able to reach the state of Samadhi through vivekakhyaati. Asana is the Third limb in Ashtangayoga of Maharshi Patanjali. Asana was defined as स्थिरसुखमासनम्, meaning that position which is comfortable and steady in Yogasutras. According to Hathayoga texts Asana is the first limb and carries the benefits of steadiness, Health and flexibility of bodily limbs.

Yogasanas are practised to develop the practitioner ability to sit comfortably in one position for an extended length of time as is necessary during meditation. In Rajayoga, asana refers to the sitting position, but in Hathayoga it means something more. Asana practices prepares Yoga practitioner to attain disease free body though which various energy and psychic channels will be opened and prepares yoga practitioner to attain Liberation. Though these Asana practices are seems to be physical postures yet these practices have its direct connections with higher bodies i.e., pranamayakosa, manomayakosa, vijnanamayakosa and anandamayakosa. Asana practices prepares yoga sadhaka to achieve balance state to attain Holistic Health.

1.2 OBJECTIVE

- To understand the importance of Asana practice role in Hathayoga and its benefits.
- To understand various types of Asanas and its benefits.
- To impart the knowledge of rules and regulations for Asana practitioner.
- The basic warm-up practices which improve students' flexibility and prepare them for advanced practice.
- To acquire knowledge of various Asana movements on body and mind.
- To observe and learn internal changes of body and mind.
- To understand the different types of Asanas and its sequences.
- To Distinguish Yogic Practices greatness and importance in day to day life .
- Understands the Traditional methods of practices.
- To prepare Yoga Sadhakas how to apply the learned practices in therapeutic perceptions.

1.3 ASANAS:MEANING, DEFINITION, TYPES AND CLASSIFICATION

Asana means a state of being in which one can remain physically and mentally steady, calm, quiet and comfortable. According to Hathayoga asana is spoken of as the first limb or part of Hathayoga. Swami Swathmarama says - Having done asana one attains steadiness of body and mind, freedom from diseases and lightness of the limbs - the same said –

हठस्य प्रथमाङ्गत्वदासनं पूर्वमुच्यते ।

कुर्यात् तदासनं स्थैर्यमारोग्यं चाङ्गलाघवम् ॥

But in Yogasutras of Sage Patanjali there is a concise definition of yogasanas- स्थिरसुखमासनम्, meaning that position which is comfortable and steady. Here in this context Yogasanas are practised to develop the practitioner ability to sit comfortably in one position for an extended length of time as is necessary during meditation. In Rajayoga, asana refers to the sitting position, but in Hathayoga it means something more. Asanas are specific body positions which open the energy channels and psychic centres. They are tools to higher awareness and provide the stable foundation for our exploration of the body, breath, mind and beyond. The Hathayogis also found that by developing control of the body through asana, the mind is also controlled. Therefore, practice of asana is the fore most in Hathayoga.

In spiritual term yoga is described as the union of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness. But on practical level yoga is a means of balancing and harmonising the body, mind and emotions. This practical level can be achieved through the practice of asana, pranayama, mudra, bandha, shatkarma and meditation.

The science of yoga begins to work on the outermost aspect of the personality, the physical body, which for the most people is a practical and familiar starting point. When imbalance is experienced at this level, the organs, muscles and nerves no longer function in harmony, rather they act in opposition to each other. For instance, the endocrine

system might become irregular and the efficiency of the nervous system decrease to such an extent that a disease will manifest. Yoga aims to bringing the different bodily functions into perfect coordination so that they work for the good of the whole body.

Hathayoga is a process through which purification and control of the body take place by restructuring the pranic flow. Through the practice of asana, steadiness develops, prana moves freely and there is less chance of disease. When prana flows without any disturbance then the body also becomes supple. Stiffness of the body is due to blockages and an accumulation of toxins. When prana begins to flow the toxins are removed from the system and sadhaka will be able to bend and stretch in a relaxed manner without having to do vigorous warming up exercises. When the store of prana is increased to a greater degree then the body will move by itself without any strain.

The ultimate purpose of Hathayoga is not only bringing healthy body to Sadhaka but also awakening of Kundalini Sakthi, the evolutionary energy in man. Practising asanas stimulates the chakras, distributing the generated energy of Kundalini all over the body.

Hathayoga not only strengthens the body and improves health but also activates and awakens the higher centres responsible for the evolution of human consciousness.

Yogasananas work positively on the body - mind connection. The body and mind are not separate entities although there is a tendency to think and act as though they are. The gross form of the mind is the body and the subtle form of the body is the mind. The practice of asana integrates and harmonises the two. Both the body and the mind harbour tensions or knots. Every mental knot has corresponding physical, muscular knot and vice-versa. The aim of asana is to release these knots.

Yogasananas and exercises are not same. Yogasananas have often been thought of as a form of exercise. They are not exercises. When yogasananas are performed respiration and metabolic rates slow down, the consumption of oxygen and the body temperature drop. During

exercise, however, the breath and metabolism speed up, oxygen consumption rises, and the body gets hot. Yoga postures tend to arrest catabolism whereas exercise promotes it. In addition asanas are designed to have specific effects on the glands and internal organs, and to alter electrochemical activity in the nervous system. So, yogasanas and exercises are not same.

Dynamic practices are not intended to develop muscles or make the body fitter but to increase flexibility, speed up circulation, loosen the muscles and joints, release energy blocks and remove stagnant blood from different parts of the body. These dynamic asanas tone the skin and muscles, strength the lungs, improves movement in the digestive and excretory system. Static practices have more useful and powerful effect on the pranic and mental bodies. They are performed with little or no movement, the body often remaining in one position for a few minutes. These are specifically concerned with bringing tranquility to the mind and preparing the practitioner for the `higher practices of yoga, such as meditation. These static asanas are very useful who are in the practice of prathyahara – sense withdraws.

In Hathayogapradipika Swathmarama said that he going to explain some of the asanas accepted by Munis Vasishta and Yogis such as Matsyendranath. He said -

वसिष्ठाद्यैश्चमुनिभिःमत्स्येन्द्राद्यैश्चयोगिभिः ।

अङ्गीकृतान्यासनानिकथ्यन्तेकानिचिन्मया॥

1.4 NUMBER & TYPES OF ASANAS

Here Swathmarama explained these asanas along with definitions and benefits. Those are -

1.Swasthikasana, 2.Gomukhasana, 3.Veerasana, 4.Koormasana, 5.Kukkutasana, 6.Uttanakoormasana, 7.Dhanurasana, 8.Savasana.

In another context Swathamarama said -

चतुरशीत्यासनानिशिवेनकथितानिच ।

तेभ्यश्चतुष्कमादायसारभूतंब्रवीम्यहम् ॥

Here it is mentioned that 84 asanas were taught by Lord Siva. Out of those he is going to describe the four important asanas. But some texts says that 84 lakh asanas have been told by Siva taking examples from each of 84 lakh kinds of creatures. Here in this context Swathmarama explained four asanas along with definitions and benefits. i.e., Siddhasana, Padmasana, Simhasana, and Bhadrasana. Though Swathamara explained four, the recommended asana by Swathmarama is Siddhasana and said that Siddhasana is the best asana of all four asanas. It is said -

सिद्धंपद्मंतथासिंहंभद्रंचेतितुष्टयम् ।

श्रेष्ठं तत्रापि च सुखेतिष्ठेत्सिद्धासने सदा ॥

A correct meditative pose is very important to yogi, therefore, Swathmarama advices that any follower of Matsyendranath must practice these four asanas.

After practising asanas the sadhaka should feel an energy boost than an energy loss. If any tiredness and uneasy occurs it means that the practice is done incorrectly. Pranayama should practice only after asanas. In the systematic science of Hathayoga, asanas prepare the physical body to remove gross impurities and activates prana. Like this there is sequence of Hathayoga. It is said-

आसनं कुम्भकं चित्रं मुद्राख्यं करणं तथा ।

अथनादानुसन्धनम् अभ्यासानुक्रमो ह्येते ॥

Asana, varieties of kumbhaka, practices called Mudras and concentration on the inner sound that is nada comprise the sequence of Hathayoga. Asana is the first limb or part in Hathayoga practice.

1.5 METHODS AND BENEFITS OF ASNAS

GENERAL NOTES FOR THE ASANA PRACTITIONER

Some of the below given instructions are beneficial to get success in asana. Those are :-

BREATHING:- Always breathe through the nose unless specific instructions are given by Guru. Try to coordinate the breath with the asana practice.

RELAXATION:- Savasana may be performed at any point during asana practice, especially when feeling physically or mentally tired. Savasana should be practised on completion of the asana programme.

COUNTERPOSE:-Counterpose is necessary during middle and advanced group of asanas. Backward bends are followed by forward bends and vice versa. What ever asana is practiced on one side of the body is repeated on the otherside also. This counter pose is necessary to bring the body back to a balanced state. However, when asanas are practising for therapeutic reasons, a counterpose may not be needed.

TIME OF PRACTICE :- Asana may be practised with an empty stomach early in the morning or may be practised at any time of day except after meals. Atleast three to four hours gap must be there between asanas and meals.

PLACE OF PRACTICE :- Hatha texts already mentioned place of practice. We already discussed in above section. Practice in such place or practice in a well ventilated room free from insects, mosquitoes where it is calm and quiet.

BLANKET:- Use a blanket of a natural material for the practices as this will act as an insulator between the body and the earth.

CLOTHES:-During practice of asanas it is better to wear loose , light and comfortable dress which is cottonmaterial. While practising asanas never wear spectacles, watches and other jewellery.

EMPTYING THE BOWELS:- Before commencing the asana programme,the bladder and intestines should perferably be empty.

DIET :- Hatha texts already mentioned Pathya and Apathya(Eatables and Uneatables). Follow such dietary pattern. It is better to get Mitahara which is already mentioned.

NO STRAINING:- Never produce any strain on body and mind while doing asanas. Beginners may find muscle stiffness but after several

weeks of regular practice such stiffness may not find body becomes more flexible.

AGE LIMITATIONS:- Asana may be practised by people of all age groups, male and female.

CONTRA INDICATIONS:- People with fractured bone or who are suffering from chronic ailments and diseases such are stomach ulcer, TB, hernia etc., should consult yoga teacher before commencing asanas.

TERMINATION OF ASANAS:- If there is excessive pain in any part of the body the asana should be terminated immediately and if necessary get Guru's advice. Do not stay in an asana if discomfort is felt.

INVERTED ASANA:- If there is any gastric problem, blood pressure, heart problem, menstrual time or later stage of pregnancy never practice such inverted asanas.

1.5.1. Swasthikasana

जनूर्वोरन्तरे सम्यक् कृत्वा पादतले उभे ।
ऋजुकायः समासीनः स्वस्तिकं तत् प्रचक्षते ॥

METHOD

Sit cross-legged and bring the feet up between the thighs and calf muscles. Place the hands in jnana or chin mudra.

BENIFITES

- This is a steady sitting position, it affects the whole body. Pranashakti is directed in a particular manner suitable for meditation.
- The exact points of stimulation can be found by pressing along the acupuncture meridians.
- The sciatic nerve is gently massaged
- The symbol of the swastika represents fertility, creativity and auspiciousness.

1.5.2. Gomukhasana

सव्ये दक्षिणगुल्फं तु पृष्ठपार्श्वे नियोजयेत् ।
दक्षिणेऽपि तथा सव्यं गोमुखं गोमुखाकृति ॥

METHOD

- Bend the right knee and place the right foot so that the left heel touches the side of the left buttock. Then bend the left leg over the right thigh so that the heel is placed close to the right buttock.
- This gives the impression of a cow's face. Then join the hands behind the back. Stretch the left arm up in the air and bring it down behind the head and back.
- Stretch the right arm downward and bring it up the back. Clasp the two hands together.

BENEFITES

- Gomukhasana tones the muscles and nerves around the shoulders and the cardiac plexus.
- The nadis connected with the reproductive organs and glands are also influenced.
- Regulating the hormonal secretions.
- Gomukhasana affects the vajra nadi and prevents prana from flowing outward.

1.5.3. Veerasana

एकं पादं तथैकस्मिन् विन्यसेदूरुणि स्थिरम् ।
इतरस्मिंस्तथा चोरं वीरासनमितीरितम् ॥

METHOD

- Sit on the left heel, bend the right knee and place the foot beside the left knee.
- Place the right elbow on the right knee and the palm against the right cheek.
- The left hand should be placed on the left knee. Close the eyes and concentrate on the breath.
- Hold the position for a minute or two.
-

BENIFITES

- Veerasana stabilizes the energy flow to the reproductive organs.
- It increases willpower and strengthens the body.
- Specific nadis in the legs which are connected to the sex glands, sex organs and associated brain centres are stimulated.

1.5.4. Koormasana

गुदं निरुध्य गुल्फाभ्यां व्युत्क्रमेण समाहितः ।

कूर्मासनं भवेदेतदिति योगविदो विदुः ॥

METHOD

- First sit in vajrasana with the knees together and the feet under the buttocks.
- Then place the feet in such a way that the heels press the anus and the toes point outwards.
- The weight is on the heels and the sides of the feet. In this way, the body must be well-balanced, straight and relaxed.
- If this is too strenuous on the feet, the heels may be kept further apart.

BENIFITES

- This asana is very good for straightening a curved spine.
- It is useful for both celibates and householders.
- Those people suffering from lack of energy, sexual and urinary disorders, etc. can practice koormasana to help rectify these problems.
- This asana is extremely helpful for those who have a slipped disc.

1.5.5. Kukutasana

पद्मासनं तु संस्थाप्य जानूर्वोरन्तरे करौ ।

निवेश्य भूमौ संस्थाप्य व्योमस्थं कुक्कुटासनम् ॥

METHOD

- Sit in padmasana. Insert the right arm between the right thigh and calf muscle, and the left arm between the left thigh and calf muscle.
- Place the palms of the hands firmly on the ground with the fingers pointing forward.
- Balance the weight of the body on the hands and raise the body off the ground.
- The arms and wrists will have to be strong to support the body.
- Inhale slowly as you raise the body.
- Hold the breath in the final position or breathe normally.
- Remain in the final pose for as long as is comfortable, keeping the head straight and the eyes fixed on a point in front.
- Exhale while lowering the body to the ground.

BENEFITES

- This asana is said to be useful in the process of awakening kundalini.
- It strengthens the arm and shoulder muscles and gives the sensation of levitation.
- Normally the body weight is on the legs and feet, but in this asana it is altered and, therefore, the energies of the body flow in a different direction.

1.5.6. Uttanakoormasana

कुक्कुटासनबन्धस्थो दोभ्यां सम्बध्य कन्धराम् ।

भवेत् कूर्मवदुत्तान एतदुत्तानकूर्मकम् ॥

METHOD

- Lie in shavasana. Bring the knees up to the chest and do padmasana.
- Push the right arm between the right calf muscle and thigh, up past the elbow, and the left arm between the left calf muscle and thigh, up past the elbow. This is also called garbhasana, the embryo pose.
- In the final position the breath will be shallow because the stomach and lungs are pressed tightly.
- To come out of the position, first unclasp the hands, then unfold the legs and lie flat in shavasana for a few minutes. It is

essential to perform this asana on a blanket; otherwise you could damage the protruding back vertebrae.

BENIFITES

- Uttankoormasana tones the nervous system.
- induces relaxation, if the final position is held comfortably.
- It is particularly recommended for people who suffer from nervous disorders.
- It regulates the adrenal glands.
- Uttankoormasana stimulates digestion and appetite.

1.5.7. Dhanurasana

पादाङ्गुष्ठौ तु पाणिभ्यां गृहीत्वा श्रवणादधि ।
धनुराकर्षणं कुर्याद् धनुरासनमुच्यते ॥

METHOD

- Lie flat on the stomach with the forehead resting on the floor.
- Bend the knees and hold both ankles.
- Separate the knees. Inhale while slightly raising the knees, head and chest, at the sametime pulls the feet away from the hands and upwards.
- The whole body should move simultaneously into the posture.
- Exhale while lowering the body and relaxing on the floor.

BENIFITES

- It regulates the digestive, eliminatory and reproductive organs.
- It massages the liver and pancreas and is thus very useful for yogic management of diabetes.
- The kidneys are stimulated and the whole alimentary canal is toned.
- It stimulates and regulates the endocrine glands, particularly the thyroid and adrenal glands, and it induces production of cortisone.

8. Savasana.

उत्तानं शववद्भूमौ शयनं तच्छ्रवासनम् ।
शवासनं श्रान्तिहरं चित्तविश्रान्तिकारकम् ॥

METHOD

- Lie flat on the back. Separate the feet slightly, place the hands by the sides of the body, about one foot away, with the palms facing upwards.
- The legs, back and head should be in alignment, not crooked. Relax the whole body; keep the eyes and mouth closed.
- Breathe naturally through the nose.
- Concentrate on the natural breath and feel the body becoming looser and lighter with each exhalation.
- Keep the awareness on the breath and the physical body.

BENEFITS

- This practice is useful for developing body awareness and pratyahara.
- The body is completely relaxed, awareness of the mind develops.
- It is very useful in yogic management of high blood pressure, peptic ulcer, anxiety, hysteria, cancer and all psychosomatic diseases and neuroses.
- it is a static pose it revitalizes the entire system.

1.6 THERAPEUTIC CONCEPTS OF ASANA

Yoga Therapy works using the principles of Applied Yoga (kriyayoga or sadhanayoga). Yoga aims at elimination of the cause of disease itself. It destroys the root of pain. It works as a preventive medicine and strengthens the immunity system. It protects the body from microbes, pollution and stressful conditions. Sage Patanjali offers a chain of eight practices (astangayoga) which destroy impurities and ensure perfect health. They are 1. Yama 2. Niyama 3. Asana 4. Pranayama 5. Pratyahara 6. Dharana 7. Dhyana and 8. Samadhi. The tradition divides these eight into two groups-sadhana yoga and siddhi yoga. Practices involving physical body such as asana and pranayama constitute sadhana yoga, while the benefits accrued thereof come under siddhi yoga. The primary objective of sadhana yoga is to prevent entry of factors that disintegrate harmony in the body. During this process, the body gains endurance, strength, stamina and vitality. And this is possible only when the body is purified of all its wastes, poisons, negative emotions and other psycho-physical disorders.

Yoga tradition considers muscular contractions (bandha) and squeezes (mudra) and special purificatory techniques (kriya) as constituents of asana practice. The bodily positions performed provide positive stretches and relaxation not only to different muscles attached to the bones but give gentle massage to the internal organs also.

Dhyana:

Meditation is a process wherein the mind is focussed on to a single point. The point of attention may be either inside the body or outside. The object of concentration (dharana) must always be a pleasing one. Meditation must be practiced at the end of yoga practice i.e., after asana and pranayama practice. Meditation calms down the mental disturbances and deepens the ability of understanding, memory and recollection. It instils confidence in the practitioner, which is needed to encounter problems in day to day life. It implants the qualities of tolerability, compassion and friendliness which help to maintain positive social relations. Upanisads, Puranas, Agamas and Tantras described several methods of meditation. There are two types of meditation-(1) sagarbha or with mantra and (2) agarbha or without mantra. The object and method of meditation is not the same for all persons. It must be selected by a guru (traditionally trained teacher) suitable to the temperament and requirement of the practitioner.

YOGA is a science and philosophy as well. The practices of Yoga are systematically defined and has modern physiological basis. It teaches proper way of living. Hence, Yoga has been practiced in India for many centuries to achieve positive health.

The advancement in Physical Sciences brought radical changes in man's life. It made man to live under strained conditions. The emotional imbalances and mental conflicts are responsible for many disorders like nervous debility, Hyper-tension, diabetics, asthma, obesity etc. The modern medicine failed to give permanent cure except providing temporary symptomatic relief.

In recent decades, the practices of Yoga have been brought into light again. The preventive, curative and promotive values of Yoga are recognized and used to lead a happy and peaceful life. Lot of research is going on to establish and explain the effect of various Yogic practices on Psycho-physiological functions of the body. The science of Yoga looked upon man as an integrated unit of body-mind-spirit complex. According to Yoga imbalance in the senses, mind and intellect results in the disease. Disease in the modern medical terms is dis-functioning of organs or systems which may be due to congenital, external atmospheric agents like allergens, toxins, pollutants or infectious germs. Apart from these causative factors, it has also recognized that other major cause for disease would be the factors of internal imbalances like mental restlessness, emotional upsurges or intellectual conflicts that lead to stress reactions.

This view of modern perspective reminds the concept of Panchakosa Theory of man's existence as given in the Yogic texts, and the theory of disease as explained by Yogavasista. According to these texts all modern diseases arise in manomayakosa level. They arise from our actions that are governed by our emotions, strong likes and

dislikes rather than what is right or what is wrong. Going against what is right causes imbalance, a disease at the manomayakosa. If the imbalance at the manomayakosa is not remedied at an appropriate time, it spreads to pranamayakosa and disturbs the balance as a result of which breathing pattern is badly affected. This disturbed breathing causes stress reactions resulting in the mal-function of autonomic and endocrine systems.

When the senses and mind are calmed the disorder automatically disappears. This forms the basis and principle of Yoga Therapy. The body and mind are disciplined and perfected by the practices of Yoga. The practices of asanas, pranayama and meditation along with yama and niyama are used in the treatment of diseases.

The practice of asanas include the practice of kriyas, Bandhas and Mudras. The asanas and pranayama are concerned with the physical body. They have indirect impact on the mind. While various meditative techniques for forwarded by Pathanjali are directly helpful in controlling the mind.

Asanas are special body postures which improve circulation in endocrine glands and other important organs. They improve physiological efficiency. Another important aspect of Asana is Kriya. They are practiced to keep Tridoshas – Vatha, Pitta and Kapha- in a balanced state. The Kriyas are cleaning and purifying process of inlets and outlets of the body. The practice of mudras and bandhas involve contraction of muscles and locking of prana to form a closed circuit of energy. They are complementary for pranayama practice. According to Yoga texts, control of breathing leads to control of mind. It is said that when the breath is stilled then the mind is stilled.

Matsyendrasana helps to channelize the prana in a particular directionso that awakening takes place in the dormant energy centers. It specifically stimulates the navel center or manipura chakra. Performing those asanas which direct the prana to the navel center is very important for the awakening of kundalini. The capacity of manipura is increased systematically.

Paschimottanasana is usually performed after having practiced some other asana or physical movement so that the spineand hamstrings are sufficiently supple. The knees must be kept straight throughout the practice.Paschimottanasana activates manipura chakra and releases the pranathroughsushumna, which in turn strengthens the digestive organs andtract. Of course, this does not happen after practicing only once or twice; practice has to be on a regular daily basis. Paschimottanasanastretches the whole spinal column and central nervous system throughwhichsushumna runs, thus enabling nervous and pranic impulses topass directly up to the higher centers.

Mayurasana purifies the blood, alleviates constipation, flatulence, indigestion, dyspepsia and chronic gastritis. It stimulates the liver, kidneys and gallbladder. Diabetic patients who are able to perform it can quickly improve their condition.

1.7 SUMMING UP

Yoga Therapy works using the principles of Applied Yoga (kriyayoga or sadhanayoga). Yoga aims at elimination of the cause of disease itself. It destroys the root of pain. It works as a preventive medicine and strengthens the immunity system. It protects the body from microbes, pollution and stressful conditions. Sage Patanjali offers a chain of eight practices (astangayoga) which destroy impurities and ensure perfect health. They are 1. Yama 2. Niyama 3. Asana 4. Pranayama 5. Pratyahara 6. Dharana 7. Dhyana and 8. Samadhi. The tradition divides these eight into two groups-sadhana yoga and siddhi yoga. Practices involving physical body such as asana and pranayama constitute sadhana yoga, while the benefits accrued thereof come under siddhi yoga. The primary objective of sadhana yoga is to prevent entry of factors that disintegrate harmony in the body. During this process, the body gains endurance, strength, stamina and vitality. And this is possible only when the body is purified of all its wastes, poisons, negative emotions and other psycho-physical disorders.

1.8 QUESTIONS:

1. what is the definition of asana?
- 2.write the classification of asana?
- 3.Explain method and benefits of swastikasana?
- 4.Discribe shavasana?
- 5.Explain the therapeutic aspects of Asanas?

UNIT-2

Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objective
- 2.3 Introduction To Kriya-Importance Of Purification
- 2.4 Method And Benefits Of Shat Kriyas
 - DHAUTI
 - BASTI
 - NETI
 - TRATAKA
 - NAULI
 - KAPALABHATI
- 2.5 Introduction Pranayama –Meaning And Definition Of Prana And Pranayama
- 2.6 Classification Of The Five Pranas And Upapranas
- 2.7 Types Of Pranayama And Ashtakumbhakas
- 2.8 Introduction To Mudra and Bandha
- 2.9 Summing Up
- 2.10 Questions

2.1 INTRODUCTION :

Hathayoga practices were specially designed to prepare yogasadhaka to reach higher states of yogic practices. Kriyas are cherished processes, which purifies the body internally and externally. After purifying the body properly then only one can continue further yogic practices and can achieve success in those practices. According to Hatha Pradipika one should practice kriyas to purify the body then only he/she should further practice pranayama and its related practices. Purificatory processes – Kriyas specially increase the vital capacity of the Sadhaka. Coordinates smooth and perfect functioning of bodily systems and

also mind will become free from turbulance and disturbances- and develops concentration and recommends to Pranayama and Dhyana practices. Shatkarma is regarded with great esteem who have achieved perfection and know the real extent of human capacity. After getting perfection over Kriyas the Yogasadhaka should enter into Pranayama. According to some ancient teachers, pranayama alone removes impurities and therefore they hold pranayama in esteem and not the other techniques. Various pranayama techniques and practices prepares yogasadhaka to reach disease free body and mind and also various Mudras are designed to eliminate subtle impurities of body-mind complex.

Hathayoga mainly recommends and deals with various practices of Asanas, Kriyas, Bandhas, Mudras, Pranayamas to prepare yogasadhaka to reach Samyama state. The main objective of Hathayoga is to chanelize, retain and unite the two types of prana – *prana and apana*. For this purpose, the practitioner has to train and close various *openings* in the body through which *prana* might escape. This is done by means of muscular contractions called *mudra* [seals] and *bandha* [locks]. With the help of *mudra* and *bandha*, the *prana* and *apanavayu*, which ordinarily move upward and downward, are moved in opposite directions effecting their **union** [yoga] within the *susumnanadi*. The heat [agni] generated by this *union* releases the bonds of vital energy called *kundalini shakti*.

To awaken Kundalini shakti to unite with siva (consciousness) Hathyoga practices i.e., Asanas, Kriyas, Pranayama, Bandha and Mudras plays vital and major role.

2.2 OBJECTIVE

- To impart the knowledge of scriptural method of practising kriyas, pranayamas, bandhas and mudras.
- To recognise the various usages of kriyas, pranayamas, bandhas and mudras with textual references.

- To prepare Yoga Sadhakas how to apply the learned practices of kriyas, pranayamas, bandhas and mudras in therapeutic perceptions.
- To aware the yoga practitioner regarding dos and don'ts of the practices while performing kriyas, pranayamas, bandhas and mudras.
- Pick out the underlying curative aspects of purificatory techniques of Hatha Yoga and apply them in daily life.
- Appreciate the bio-breathing patterns of ancient Indian health science.
- Explain the role of prana, antahkarana, bodily structure as per ancient yoga manuals.
- Understand the techniques of vritti pranayama and teach the same for patients.
- Appreciate the ancient technique of rejuvenation and experiment the same on modern bio-medical apparatus.
- To have an in depth understanding of physiological changes following the practice of yoga cleaning methods
- To have a brief idea of the underlying mechanism behind the possible benefits as a result of purificating practices and pranic practices.

2.3 INTRODUCTION TO KRIYA-IMPORTANCE OF PURIFICATION

In Hathayogapradipika the first thing we see is that Yogi Swathmarama does not worry at all about self control and self discipline in the form of yama and niyama. The order here is very different. He begins by saying that one should first purify the whole body, the stomach, intestines, nervous system and other systems. Therefore in Hathayoga first of all we take care of the body and purify it by six methods called as shat kriyas. Shat means six, kriyas means purificatory methods. Just as machines produces wastes like

That our body continuously produces wastes. These wastes are three kinds (tridoshas):-

1. vata
2. pitta
3. kapha

If we cleanse the body internally from time to time, the excess of these three metabolic products are removed and their formation is regulated and balanced. Then perfect health can be maintained. Before commencing pranayama, any imbalance in the three doshas (humours) - vata, pitta and kapha should be removed - excess body fat, mucous blockages, gas in the stomach and intestines, etc., should be eliminated. In Hathayogapradipika six purificatory processes were designed specifically for this purpose. Those are Shatkriyas means six actions. These six kriyas specifically increase vital capacity of the sadhaka. These kriyas designed not for therapy purpose only, but to create harmony in the body and mind and to prepare sadhaka for further practices. These kriyas bring healthy body through which one can attain disturbed free mind. For those already doshas are in balanced they need not to practice these six kriyas. However it is better to learn these kriyas under experienced Guru to practice whenever necessity arises. In Hathayogapradipika it is said:-

मेदक्षेष्माधिकः पूर्वं षट्कर्माणि समाचरेत् ।
अन्यस्तु नाचरेत्तानि दोषाणां समभावतः ॥

The six purificatory processes are:-

1. DHAUTI 2. BASTI 3. NETI 4. TRATAKA 5. NAULI 6. KAPALABHATI.

The same said:-

धौतिर्वस्तिः तथा नेतिः त्राटकं नौलिकं तथा ।
कपालभातिश्चैतानि षट्कर्माणि प्रचक्षते ॥

2.4 METHOD & BENEFITS OF SHAT KRIYAS

1. DHAUTI:-

A strip of wet cloth measuring about four angulas width or width of the tongue and 15 handspans length is slowly swallowed and then taken out, as instructed by the guru is called VASTRA DHAUTI. Here the cloth should be finely woven cotton which is unused and clean. The cloth must also be trimmed neatly so that no loose threads fray on the sides. It should be no wider than the tongue. The cloth should be washed well and then boil it in water. The cloth should be in a container of warm water while practising.

Sitting in squatting position with the heels flat on the ground and the buttocks off the ground or resting on a brick or something about the same height, spread one end of the cloth over the tongue and start swallowing the cloth slowly. When two thirds of the cloth have been swallowed, leave the remaining few inches hanging out of the mouth and stand up to practice nauli. After completing nauli the cloth should be taken out slowly sitting in a squatting position. This is the procedure of VastraDhauti.

BENEFITS/EFFECTS:

Destroys or removes cough, asthma, diseases of spleen, leprosy, excess mucus, etc.,.

2. BASTI:-

Sitting in Utkatasana, navel deep water, insert a tube(pipe) which is opened at both ends, into the anus and contract the anus so that water goes inner side and hold the water as long as possible and then expel so that the water which is inner side comes out. (This is to be performed with the support of Uddiyana Bandha). This cleansing with water is called BASTI karma.

BENEFITS/EFFECTS: -

Enlargement of glands and spleen, diseases arising from excess wind, bile and mucus are eliminated from the body through the practice of basti. Appetite increases, the body glows, senses and mind are purified.

3. NETI:-

Insert a soft thread measuring about 4mm width and 30 cm length through the nose, so that it comes out of the mouth (means the thread should be taken out through mouth) is called SUTRANETI by the Siddhas. Here the thread should not be forced through the nose but gently pushed so that it slowly passes down into the throat. When the thread reaches the back of the throat, we have to put the first two fingers into the mouth and pull the thread out through the mouth leaving a few inches of thread hanging out of the nose. Then slowly and gently pull the thread backwards and forwards for some time, then bring the thread out from the mouth. It is said in HATHAYOGA PRADIPIKA like this:-

सूत्रं वितस्ति सुस्निग्धं नासानाले प्रवेशयेत् ।
मुखान्निर्गमयेच्चैषा नेतिः सिद्धैः निगद्यते ॥

BENEFITS/EFFECTS:-

Neti is the cleaner of the brain and gives divine sight. It soon destroys all the diseases which manifest above the throat.

4. TRATAKA:-

Being calm, one should gaze steadily (means unwavering gaze) at a small point until tears are shed or eyes are filled with tears is called TRATAKA by the Acharyas (teachers). In HATHAYOGA PRADIPIKA it is said:-

निरीक्षेत्रिश्चलदृशा सूक्ष्मलक्ष्यं समाहितः ।
अश्रुसंपातपर्यन्तम् आचार्यैस्त्राटकं स्मृतम् ॥

BENEFITS/EFFECTS:-

Trataka eradicates all eye diseases, fatigue and sloth, etc. It closes the doorway which is creating problems. It should be carefully kept secret like a golden casket (jewellery box).It improves concentration.

5. NAULI:-

Lean forward, protrude the abdomen, and rotate (the muscles) from right to left with speed. This is called NAULI by the siddhas.

When the rectus abdomini muscles are rotated from left to right (anticlockwise), it is called DAKSHINA NAULI. When they are rotated from right to left (clockwise) that is VAMA NAULI. When the muscles are pulled together and middle group of the muscles protrude, it is MADHYAMA NAULI.

BENEFITS/EFFECTS:-Nauli kriya increases appetite and digestion. It removes all the disorders of the doshas and brings out happiness.

6.KAPALABHATI:-

Performing exhalation and inhalation rapidly like the bellows of a blacksmith is called KAPALABHATI. Here the emphasis (force) should be on exhalation not in inhalation. It seems in HATHAYOGAPRADIPIKA like this:-

भस्त्रावल्लोहकारस्य रेचपूरौ ससम्भ्रमम् ।

कपालभातिर्विख्याता कफदोषविशोषिणी ॥

BENEFITS/EFFECTS: - It destroys all mucus disorders and makes the cranium (skull) to glow.

2.5 INTRODUCTION PRANAYAMA – MEANING & DEFINITION OF PRANA & PRANAYAMA

Asana is the first step in Hathayoga. The next stage of Hathayoga is pranayama. Pranayama is not simply exhalation, retention and inhalation. Pranayama is more than simple breathing exercise and pranayama must be practised systematically under experienced Guru . Pranayama should start only when the body is regulated by asana and moderate diet. It is said –

अथासने दृढे योगी वशी हितमिताशनः ।

गुरूपदिष्टमार्गेण प्राणायामान् समभ्यसेत् ॥

Diet is very important in pranayama. Eating is a direct means of pranic absorption which affects the body, mind and pranic vibrations. In the beginning stage of practice, food consisting of milk and ghee is recommended. When establishment comes then restrictions are not necessary. It is said -

अभ्यासकाले प्रथमे शस्तं क्षीराज्यभोजनम् ।

ततोऽभ्यासे दृढीभूते न तादृङ् नियमग्रहः ॥

While doing pranayama the body metabolism undergoes a change. The above mentioned food maintains balance in such change.

MEANING OF PRANAYAMA:- The word pranayama is composed to two sanskrit roots prana and ayama. Prana means vital energy or life force and ayama means extension or expansion. The word pranayama means extension of the dimension of prana. Prana is vital energy exists in all things. Although closely related to the air we breathe, it is more subtle than the air or oxygen. Therefore, pranayama should not be considered as mere breathing exercises aimed at introducing extra oxygen into the lungs. pranayama utilizes breathing to influence the flow of prana in the nadi or energy channels of the pranamaya kosha or energy body.

THE PRANIC BODY:-The yogic physiology says that human framework is comprised of five bodies or sheaths, which account for the different aspects or dimensions of human existence. These five sheaths are known as:-

1. Annamayakosa - the food or material body

2. Pranamayakosa - the vital energy body
3. Manomayakosa - the mental body
4. Vijnanamayakosa- the psychic or higher mental body
5. Anandamayakosa-the transcendental or bliss body.

These five sheaths function together to form an integral whole, the practices of pranayama work mainly with pranamayakosa.

2.6 CLASSIFICATION OF THE FIVE PRANAS & UPAPRANS

THE FIVE MAJOR PRANAS AND UPA-PRANAS:-

The pranamayakosa is made up of five major pranas which are famously known as panchapranas , those are :-

1. Prana - Governing the area between the larynx and the top of the diaphragm. It is associated with the organs of respiration and speech, and the gullet, together with the muscles and nerves that activates them. It is the force by which the breath is drawn inside.
2. Apana - This is located below the navel region and provides energy for the large intestines, kidneys, anus and genitals. It excretes waste from the body.
3. Samana - This is located between the heart and navel. It activates and controls digestive system. Samana also activates the heart and circulatory system and responsible for the assimilation and distribution of nutrients.
4. Udana - This prana controls the area of the body above the neck. Udana activates all the sensory receptors. Thought and consciousness of the outside world would be impossible without it.
5. Vyana - This prana pervades all over the body, regulating and controlling all movement, and coordinating the other pranas. It acts as the reserve force for the other pranas.

UPAPRANAS OR MINOR PRANAS:- These minor pranas also five kinds :-

- 2 Naga - This upaprana is responsible for belching and hiccups
- 3 Koorma- This upaprana opens the eyes and stimulates blinking
- 4 Krikara-This upaprana generates hunger, thirst, sneezing and coughing.
- 5 Devadatta- This upaprana induces sleep and yawning
- 6 Dhananjaya - This upaprana lingers immediately after death and is responsible for decomposition of the body.

PRANA AND CHITTA :- Prana and Chitta (Mind) are interlinked. Fluctuations of one means fluctuations of the other. If one is balanced automatically other is also balanced. So, whenever prana moves then the chitta also moves. When prana does not move then chitta stays still. so, by restraining the vayu the yogi attains steadiness. It is said -

चलेवातेचलंचित्तनिश्चलेनिश्चलंभवेत् ।

योगीस्थाणुत्वमाप्नोतिततोवायुंनिरोधयेत्॥

The breathing process is directly connected to the brain and CNS and it is one of the most vital processes in the body system. It has also some connections with the hypothalamus, the brain centre which controls emotional responses. The hypothalamus is responsible for transforming perception into cognitive experience. Erratic breathing sends erratic impulses to this centre and thus creates disturbed response. So, prana and chitta are related.

PRANAYAMA REMOVES BLOCKAGES IN NADIS: - If the nadis are full of impurities, the vital force does not pass in the middle channel. When the prana does not move into the middle channel then the attainment of perfection become difficult. So, pranayama remove the impurities in the nadis, the impurities are waste and residue of sensuous living and desires. It is said :-

मलाकुलासु नाडीषु मारुतो नैव मध्यगः ।

कथं स्यादुन्मनीभावः कार्यसिद्धिः कथं भवेत् ॥

Nadi is a flow of energy. These are wire like structures. There are 72 thousand nadis in our body.

MINDS POSITION WHILE PRACTISING PRANAYAMA:- During pranayama practice the mind should be steady and aware not moving from thought to thought. When the mind is sattwic, the inner awareness grows quickly and prana acculates. Therefore, pranayama should be done daily with sattwic state of mind so that the impurities are driven out of sushumanadi and purification occurs. It is said:-

मलाकुलासु नाडीषु मारुतो नैव मध्यगः ।
कथं स्यादुन्मनीभावः कार्यसिद्धिः कथं भवेत् ॥

BREATH, HEALTH, LIFE SPAN AND PRANAYAMA:-

The breath is the most vital process of the body. It influences the activities of each and every cell and most importantly is intimately linked with the performance of the brain. Human beings breathe about 15 times per minute and 21,600 times per day. Most people breathe incorrectly, using only a small part of their lung capacity. Practice of pranayama techniques bring awareness how to develop respiratory process (though breathing is mainly an unconscious process, conscious control of it may be taken at any time) and improve integrity of the body and mind. Rhythmic, deep and slow respiration stimulates and is stimulated by calm, content states of mind. Irregular breathing disturbs the rhythms of the brain and leads to physical, emotional and mental blocks. Pranayama provides not only quality of life but also length or quantity of life is achieved by the rhythm of the respiration.

Those who breathe in short, quick gasps are likely to have a shorter life span than those who breathe slowly and deeply. On the physical level, this is because the respiration is directly related to the heart. A slow breathing rate keeps the heart stronger and better nourished and contributes to a longer life. Deep breathing also increases the absorption of energy by the pranamayakosa, enhancing dynamism, vitality and general wellbeing. Our ancient yogis and rishis studied nature in great detail and find out this truth.

GENERAL NOTES FOR THE PRANAYAMA

PRACTITIONER:-

It is very important that an experienced Guru's instructions are essential to practice pranayama. The below given instructions also very useful along with guru's instructions. Those are:-

BREATHING:- Always breathe through the nose (nostrils) and not the mouth unless specifically instructed otherwise. The nose should be cleaned regularly by jala-neti prior to the practice of pranayama.

TIME OF PRACTICE :- The best time to practice pranayama is during early morning or another good time is just after sunset. However, those who are completely dedicated to a life hathayogasadhana should practice pranayama at the four specified times - Early morning, midday, evening and midnight.

PLACE OF PRACTICE :- Hathayoga texts already mentioned place to practice hathayoga. In such place pranayama should be practised. If that is not possible now a day's practice in a quiet, clean and pleasant room which is well ventilated free from insects and mosquitoes is also recommended.

SITTING POSITION:- Any suitable meditative posture is recommended in which sadhaka can sit for a long time steadily and comfortably. The best asana recommended by Great Yogins is Siddha/Siddhayoni asana.

SEQUENCE:- Pranayama should be practised only after practising asanas. Hatha texts accepted this sequence. After practising pranayama one may perform savasana if it is necessary for a few minutes.

BATHING :- It is better to get a bath before practice or take a bath for at least half an hour after the practice to allow the body temperature to normalise.

CLOTHES :- Loose, comfortable cotton clothing should be worn during pranayama practice.

EMPTY STOMACH:- Practice pranayama with an empty stomach in the morning or at least three to four hours after meals can start pranayama. Food in the stomach provides pressure on the diaphragm and lungs, making full and deep respiration difficult.

DIET :- A balanced diet of protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals is suitable for most pranayama practices. Hatha texts say that eating is a direct means of pranic absorption which affects the body, mind and pranic vibrations. In the beginning stage of practice, food consisting of milk and ghee is recommended. When establishment comes then restrictions are not necessary.

AVOID STRAIN:- During pranayama practice the mind should be steady and aware not moving from thought to thought. When the mind is sattvic, the inner awareness grows quickly and prana accumulates. Therefore, pranayama should be done daily with a sattvic state of mind so that the impurities are driven out of sushumna and purification occurs.

EFFECTS: - While practising pranayama various symptoms may manifest even in healthy people. Sensations of itching, tingling, heat or cold and feelings of lightness or heaviness may occur. These are only temporary but do not stay long.

SYMPTOMS :- When the body and mind are purified and the quantum of prana is increased, then various symptoms manifest during pranayama. Those are - At first there is perspiration, in the middle stage trembling in the highest stage complete steadiness.

CONTRA-INDICATIONS: - Pranayama should not be practised during illness but according to Guru's advice one may proceed in pranayama.

NADISODHANA PRANAYAMA

The first pranayama practice is Nadisodhanapranayama. This is also known as alternate nostril breathing, which activates and harmonizes ida and pingalanadis. This Nadisodhanapranayama purifies nadis. Yogi Swathmarama states that nadisodhanapranayama will purify the nadis within three months if practised according to said manner. Now let us know what is nadisodhana pranayama according to Hathayogapradipika :-

It is must to practice pranayama techniques only sitting in any meditative pose. Sitting in Padmasana or any other meditative asana Inhale the air through the left nostril and hold the breath to capacity(Retention) and then exhale through the left nostril. Then again inhale through the right nostril, perform kumbhaka and exhale completely through the left nostril. Inhale with the same nostril through which exhalation was done and retent the breath to utmost capacity and exhale through the other nostril slowly and not forcibly. Repeat the same process again and again this is called nadisodhanapranayama.Those who practice Nadisodhanapranayama, according to said times and said ratio, within three months totally all nadis will be purified. In Hathayogapradipika it is said:-

प्राणं चेदिडया पिबेन्नियमितं भूयोऽन्यया रेचयेत्
पीत्वा पिङ्गलया समीरणमथो बद्ध्वा त्यजेद्दामया ।
सूर्याचन्द्रमसोरनेन विधिनाभ्यासं सदा तन्वतां
शुद्धा नाडिगणा भवन्ति यमिनां मासत्रयादूर्ध्वतः ॥

When the nadis are purified there are external symptoms.Success is defined when the body becomes thin and glows. When the sadhaka is able to hold breath according to his wish then the digestive fire increases. If the nadis are purified then the inner sound or nada awakens and one is free from diseases. Purification of the nadis means the shakti can flow throughout the body without any disturbances and aim can be achieved. It is said in Hathyogapradipika:-

यदा तु नाडीशुद्धिः स्यात् तथा चिह्नानि बाह्यतः ।
कायस्य कृशता कान्तिः तदा जायेत निश्चितम् ॥

2.7 TYPES OF PRANAYAMA & ASHTAKUMBHAKAS

Pranayama is of three types -

1. EXHALATION(RECHAKA)
2. INHALATION (PURAKA)
3. RETENTION(KUMBHAKA).

AgainKumbhaka is of two types

1. SAHITA KUMBHAKA
2. KEVALA KUMBHAKA

In Hathayogapradipika it is said:-

प्राणायामस्त्रिधा प्रोक्तो रेचपूरककुम्भकैः ।
 सहितः केवलश्चेति कुम्भको द्विविधो मतः ॥
 यावत् केवलसिद्धिः स्यात् सहितं तावदभ्यसेत् ।
 रेचकं पूरकं मुक्त्वा सुखं यद् वायुधारणम् ॥

Until Kevala Kumbhaka is perfected, Sahita Kumbhaka has to be practiced.

Sahita Kumbhakas are of eight kinds, known as famously ashtakumbhakas. Those are:-

- 1.SURYABHEDANA 2.UJJAYI 3.SEETKARI
- 4.SEETALI
- 5.BHASTRIKA 6.BHRAMARI 7.MOORCHA
- 8.PLAVINI.

The same said:-

सूर्यभेदनमुज्जायी सीत्कारी शीतली तथा ।
 भस्त्रिका भ्रामरी मूर्च्छाप्लाविनीत्यष्टकुम्भकाः ॥

1. SURYABHEDANA:-

Taking any comfortable sitting posture, the yogi should breathe in the air slowly through the right nostril. Then it should be confined (retention) within, so that it fills from the nails to the roots of the hair, and then let out (exhale) through the left nostril slowly. This is called SURYABHEDA. It should be done again and again in the same process.

BENEFITS:-

Cleans the forehead (cranium), destroys imbalances of the wind dosha and eliminates worms

कपालशोधनं वातदोषघ्नं कृमिदोषहृत् ।

2. UJJAYI:-

Sitting in a comfortable meditative pose, closing the mouth, inhale with control and concentration through both nostrils (ida and pingala), while doing inhalation there is partial contraction of the glottis which produces a light snoring sound (Soham may be adopted, while inhaling mentally repeat 'so' and while exhaling repeat the sound 'ham') The sound must come from the throat and not forced to come through the nose. It should be restrained as said in Suryabhedana and exhale through ida (left.). This is called UJJAYI. This pranayama can be done while moving, standing, sitting 'गच्छता तिष्ठता कार्यमुज्जाय्याख्यं तु कुम्भकम् ॥

BENEFITS:-

Removes phlegm from the throat and stimulates the digestive fire. It destroys the defects of the nadis and dhatus
नाडीजलोदराधातुगतदोषविनाशनम् ।

3. SEETKARI:-

Seetkari is performed by drawing in the air through the mouth, by making a hissing sound ,without gaping the mouth and exhale through the nose. Here we have to press the lower and upper teeth together and separate the lips as much as is comfortable and breathe in should be through the gaps in the teeth. By performing this, one becomes a second Kamadeva (God of love). It is said in HATHAYOGA PRADIPIKA:-

सीत्कां कुर्यात् तथा वक्त्रे घ्राणेनैव विजृम्भिकाम् ।

एवमभ्यासयोगेन कामदेवो द्वितीयकः ॥

BENEFITS:-

Those who are practising Seetkari is adored by the circle of Yoginis and becomes the controller of creation and dissolution, being without hunger, thirst, sleep and laziness. It is said:-

Seetkari particularly works on the heat/cold aspect of the body. Control of any two opposite forces in the body/mind leads to control of the

other aspects of the physical, mental, emotional and psychic makeup. Swathmarama specifically mentioned that Seetkari eliminates indolence and the need and desire to eat, drink and sleep.

योगिनीचक्रसंमान्य सृष्टिसंहारकारकः ।
न क्षुधा न तृषा निद्रा नैवालस्यं प्रजायते ॥

4. SEETALI:-

Inhale the air through the tongue (Roll the sides up so that it forms a tube)and practisekumbhaka and the exhale the air through the nostrils. This is called SEETALI. It is said in HATHAYOGA PRADIPIKA :-

जिह्वया वायुमाकृष्य पूर्ववत् कुम्भसाधनम् ।
शनकैघ्राणरन्ध्राभ्यां रेचयेत् पवनं सुधीः ॥

BENEFITS:-

Seetali cures an enlarged stomach or spleen and other related diseases, fever, excess bile, hunger, thirst etc.ThisSeetali pranayama counteracts poisons.

विषाणि शीतली नाम कुम्भिकेयं निहन्ति हि ।

5.BHASTRIKA:-

Sitting in any meditative pose, the practitioner should inhale and exhale repeatedly like the bellows(of a blacksmith).When the body is tired then inhale through the right nostril and perform retention systematically, exhale through the left nostril and perform the same technique with the opposite nostril also. This is called Bhastrika pranayama.

BENEFITS:-

By performing this Bhastrika pranayama, imbalances of wind, bile and mucus are annihilated and the digestivefire increased.
वातपित्तश्लेष्महरं शरीराग्निविवर्धनम् ॥

This pranayama quickly arouses Kundalini sakti. It removes obstructions due to excess mucus accumulated at the entrance to

brahmanadi. This kumbhaka enables the three granthis (Brhma, Vishnu, Rudra) to be broken.

7 BHRAMARI:-

Taking any meditative pose, the practitioner should breathe in quickly, making sound like the male black bee, and exhale slowly while softly making the sound of the female black bee. In-between one has to perform kumbhaka. This is called BHRAMARI. It is said:-

वेगाद् घोषं पूरकं भृङ्गनादं भृङ्गीनादं रेचकं मन्दमन्दम् ।

योगीन्द्राणामेवभ्यासायोगाच्चित्ते जाता कदाचिदानन्दलीला ॥

BENEFITS:-

By this yogic practice one becomes lord of the yogis and the mind is absorbed in bliss.

7. MOORCHA:-

Sitting in Padmasana or Siddhasana the practitioner should inhale gradually and perform jalandhara bandha, then exhale slowly. In Hathayogapradipika it is said:-

पूरकान्ते गाढतरं बद्ध्वा जालन्धरं शनैः ।

रेचयेन्मूर्च्छनाख्येयं मनो मूर्च्छा सुखप्रदा ॥

In this kumbhaka we should hold the breath for even longer than is comfortable. Here continuous retention lowers the oxygen concentration in the blood reaching the brain, i.e., hypoxia, and then the sensation of fainting occurs. By compressing the great vessels in the neck, Jalandhanabandha influences the pressure receptors in their walls and the heart rate and blood pressure are adjusted by the reflex response. Here the word moorcha implies insensibility of mind i.e., conscious mind. This is called MOORCHA. This is called the fainting or swooning pranayama as it makes the mind inactive. This pranayama clears the mind of unnecessary thoughts and reduces awareness of the senses and external world.

8. PLAVINI:-When the belly is filled with air and the inside of the body is filled to its utmost with air, the body floats on the deepest water like the leaf of a lotus. This is called PLAVINI.

In Hathayogapradipika it is said:-

अन्तः प्रवर्त्तितोदारमारुतापूरितोदरः ।

पयस्यगाधेऽपि सुखात् प्लवते पद्मपत्रवत् ॥

2.8 INTRODUCTION TO MUDRA & BANDHA

Mudra And Bandha- Introduction,Meaning,Types

The main objective of Hathayoga is to canalize, retain and unite the two types of prana – *prana and apana*. For this purpose, the practitioner has to train and close various *openings* in the body through which *prana* might escape. This is done by means of muscular contractions called *mudra* [seals] and *bandha* [locks]. With the help of *mudra* and *bandha*, the *prana* and *apanavayu*, which ordinarily move upward and downward, are moved in opposite directions effecting their **union** [yoga] within the *susumnanadi*. The heat [agni] generated by this *union* releases the bonds of vital energy called *kundalini shakti*.

The third chapter of HathayogaPradipika elaborately deals with different types of *mudras and bandhas*, extensively used during pranayama practices dealt with in the second chapter. It has been mentioned that skilful control of prana leads to perfection [HYP II-18]. And *mudra and bandha* help to bring such effective control over the movement of prana energy. The chapter deals with **three bandhas and ten mudras**. We shall now proceed to study the practice method and benefits one by one in detail.

MUDRAS:

In yoga *mudra* means 1. a kind of hand position or gesture and 2. a muscular contraction or other physical position, which facilitates the retention of prana within the body. Some mudras are practice after asana and pranayama and some others are done with asana and pranayama to stimulate chakras and awaken the Kundalini Shakti.

When we study the different Hathayoga Texts, we find some confusion about mudras and bandhas. Some describe mudras as bandhas and some bandhas are described as mudras. Similarly, we find different names for different mudras and bandhas. This confusion arises because; the literature has been separated from Tantric Texts and written as Hathayoga practices, leaving philosophical aspects.

According to Hathayoga tradition, Adinatha has described the following **ten mudras**.

महामुद्रा महबन्धो महावेधश्च खेचरी ।
 उड्यानं मूलबन्धश्च बन्धो जालन्धराभिधः ॥
 करणी विपरीताख्या वज्रोली शक्तिचालनम् ।
 इदं हि मुद्रादशकं जरामरणनाशकम् ॥

The ten mudras are:1.Maha Mudra 2. Maha Bandha 3.Maha Vedha 4. KhechhariMudra5. UddiyanaBandha 6. Moola Bandha 7. Jalandhara Bandha 8. ViparitakaraniMudra 9. Vajroli Mudra and 10. Saktichalani Mudra.

Apart from above ten, one more important mudra of Hathayoga called **Shambhavi Mudra** is mentioned in chapter IV-35. Thus, HathayogaPradipika

altogether has mentioned eleven mudras. Now we shall proceed to examine them in detail.

Vipareethakarani Mudra: [HYP – III-78-82]

The ancient texts on yoga and tantra speak of *amrita or nector*, released by *candra*. The *-amrita* is also called *bindu visarga*. It is said that the *bindu visarga* or *nector* helps to realize higher states of consciousness, when properly utilized and distributed throughout the body. But, in general, such valuable fluid falls down and is consumed by *surya*, located in the Manipooraka Chakra. *Candra* represents the consciousness and *surya* is the body. In other words, the consciousness that flows from the upper lands to down regions is being wasted for sensual pleasures. The wastage blocks the progress in evolution. This

must be averted and reverted. The purpose of practice of any type of inverted asana is to revert the normal flow and utilize the consciousness to the maximum for the progress of life.

The sanskrita word *viparita* means *inverted or reversed*; and *karani* means *to get done*. And *mudra* means *psychic lock*. Therefore, Viparitakarani Mudra may mean the position that reverts the normal flow of consciousness.

Viparitakarani Mudra is one of the best described by Hatha Yoga Pradipika. The description seems most appropriate answer for the problem raised in the sloka 77 [chap.III], that the old age is the result of consumption of *bindu visarga*, released from *candraby* the *surya*.

Method:

HathayogaPradipika clearly states, that it should be learned from a Guru, and can never be understood by reading even a thousand scriptures [HYP-III-78&79]. Viparitakarani is described as keeping the navel above and the palate below [HYP-III-79]. Lie flat on your back with legs together, stretched straight. Relax the whole body. Keep the palms beside thighs. By taking breath slowly lift the legs, hips pressing the arms against the floor. Let the legs move over the top of the head. Support the trunk by the palms. Keep the eyes closed and relax the body. This is Viparitakarani Mudra practice. Hold the position as long as possible, for five minutes to three hours duration. Then slowly, bend the legs, by observing exhalation, over head and drop the trunk to the floor duly releasing the hand support. See that the chin should not press the chin as in Sarvangasana.

Benefits:

Physiologically, by Viparitakarani Mudra practice, we are directly concerned with the reversing the flow of a fluid from the brain centre. The process is reversed by inverting the naturally upright body position. The force of gravity naturally pulls all the body fluids down to the lower parts. When body is reverted, legs upwards, all the fluids flow back towards the head, relaxing and draining the lower parts.

When the body is brought to its normal position at the end of the practice, the lower parts receive good rich blood. This mudra also creates positive pressure on thyroid gland and para-thyroid gland, effecting balanced metabolism. It also activates Visuddhi Chakra. The practice of Viparitakarani Mudra increases digestive secretions, as a result appetite is increased and you must take proper diet at regular intervals. This mudra is useful in the treatment of varicose veins and hernia. As the pineal and pituitary and other main brain centres are supplied with rich blood, and the vascular network is relieved of its natural force, the positive health is improved in the body as a whole. The degenerative and decaying processes are usefully delayed. You become young and active. No wrinkles and grey hair appear in the body.

Contra-indications:

People suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, enlarged thyroid should never attempt this Mudra. In the beginning try to stay only for a few breathings and gradually increase the time of stay. Most important thing is that the position must be perfect and need concentrated one-pointed attention during the stay. Hence, the guidance of a perfected Guru is suggested by the *sastrakaras*.

BANDHAS

Yogi Swatmarama, after having discussed some of the important mudras meant to arrest and channelise the vital energy towards higher regions of consciousness, now moves to discuss the principal bandhas. The word *bandha* generally may mean *to lock, to bind, to hold, or to contract*. Bandha is a technique involving contraction of muscles, and organs in the physical body to hold bipolar energies moving in opposite directions.

According to Yoga Sastra, the body consists of five *koshas* [sheaths] – *annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vijnanamaya and anandamaya*. This division of the body is only for the purpose of literal understanding and it is not realistic to rigidly separate the physical body, pranic body, mental etc. They are intermingled and

interrelated and form part of a whole. Each level of manifestation has influence on other levels. Therefore, the *Annamaya Kosha* influences the *Pranamaya* and *Manomaya*; the *Pranayama Kosha* influences the *Annamaya* and *Manomaya*; and in turn *Manoma Kosha* influences the *Annamaya*, *Pranamaya*, *Vijnanamaya* and others as well. Yoga takes all the levels of existence into consideration and has provided suitable practices to train and keep them fit to rise to higher states of evolution.

Tantra Sastra speaks of presence of *three granthis* [knots or blocks] in the passage of Susumna. They are i. *Brahma granthi atmooladhara chakra* ii. *Vishnu granthi at anahatha chakra* and iii. *Rudra granthi at ajnachakrit*.

It is said that these knots or blocks are present in the psychic body. They prevent the individual on the path of meditation. They are to be removed, if one wants to have the awareness of higher realms of existence. In yoga, bandha are effectively used to remove these psychic blocks. When the granthis are released or removed the *prana* flows freely through the Susumna Nadi, which leads to mental refinement and in turn higher experiences. Thus, Bandhas play an important role in spiritual evolution of man.

Bandha

Bandha forms an integral part of asana. Asana, bandha, mudra and kriya are included in the physical practice **Asana** of *Astanga Yoga*. They are all concerned with the control of various parts of the physical body. Different organs, muscles, nerves and physiological processes within the body are massaged, stimulated and brought under the *will* of the practitioner. Bandhas form automatically while doing some asanas. To perform a bandha individually, it requires lot of skill, flexibility and control over the muscles or organs in the region, where the bandha is accomplished. In general, bandhas are applied during pranayama practice, especially, during kumbhaka phase. In fact, there is no pranayama without bandha. Best time to practice bandhas is early in the morning with an empty stomach. It needs lot of *will power* to contract, squeeze, lock and release the required area of the physical body.

Jalandhara Bandha: [HYP – III-70-73]

The Sanskrit word *jaalan* means *net*. *Jaalan* may also mean *fluid* or *water*. The word *dhara* means *stream* or *mass of flowing fluid*. Thus in total it means, *net or cluster of nadis or pathways*. Therefore, Jalandhara Bandha, is the practice or locking that controls the flow of currents or fluids through, nadis, vessels and nerves.

Method:

Jalandhara Bandha can be practiced sitting in any comfortable meditative asana. The best positions are Padmasana and Siddhasana. It can also be practiced in standing position as well. Sit in a comfortable asana and ensure that both knees touch the floor firmly. Place the palms of the hands on respective knees. Close the eyes and relax the mind. Slowly, take deep inhalation and retain the breath inside the lungs. Stretch the neck forward, bend the head and press the chin tightly against the sternum bone. Stay in this final position as long as possible without any discomfort or strain. Then slowly, release the lock, raise the chin, relax the shoulder muscles and take deep exhalation. This is one round. When the breath returns to normal, you can repeat the practice without strain. Jalandhara Bandha can also be practiced with the breath exhaled.

Benefits:

Jalandhara Bandha is useful in the treatment of throat disorders such as inflammation, stuttering, excess mucus in the throat, tonsillitis etc. It also improves the quality of the voice and activates higher centers of the brain. Application of Jalandhara Bandha balances the secretions of thyroid and Para-thyroid glands, which regulates the body metabolism. When Jalandhara Bandha is performed, the flow of energy in Ida and Pingala is arrested and directed through Susumna at Visuddha Chakra, the middle chakra separating gross elemental body and subtle body consisting buddhi, ahamkara etc.

By the practice of three Bandhas – Jalandhara, Uddiyana and Moola – you can regulate and control the flow of Prana in the body. The Prana Shakti is always in the state of flux in the senses, organs and

mind. This creates various bio-rhythms and states of mind. By developing the movement of Pranic Energy in the body and with the help of three bandhas, it is possible to avert the disadvantages of its flow in its extreme states. Then, it is not difficult to conquer the degeneration, decay, old age and death.

2.9 SUMMING UP:

Shatkriyas means six actions. These six kriyas specifically increase vital capacity of the sadhaka. These kriyas designed not for therapy purpose only, but to create harmony in the body and mind and to

prepare sadhaka for further practices. These kriyas bring healthy body through which one can attain disturbed free mind. For those already doshas

are in balanced they need not to practice these six kriyas. However it is better to learn these kriyas under experienced Guru to practice whenever necessity arises.

Asana is the first step in Hathayoga. The next stage of Hathayoga is pranayama. Pranayama is not simply exhalation, retention and inhalation. Pranayama is more than simple breathing exercise and pranayama must be practised systematically under experienced Guru . Pranayama should start only when the body is regulated by asana and moderate diet.

Diet is very important in pranayama. Eating is a direct means of pranic absorption which affects the body, mind and pranic vibrations.

The word pranayama is composed to two sanskrit roots prana and ayama. Prana means vital energy or life force and ayama means extension or expansion.

The word pranayama means extension of the dimension of prana. Prana is vital energy exists in all things

The yogic physiology says that human framework is comprised of five bodies or sheaths, which account for the different aspects or dimensions of human existence

These five sheaths function together to form an integral whole, the practices of pranayama work mainly with pranamayakosa.

The pranamayakosa is made up of five major pranas which are famously known as panchapranas, upapranas. Prana and Chitta (Mind) are interlinked. Fluctuations of one means fluctuation of the other. If one is balanced automatically other is also balanced. So, whenever prana moves then the chitta also moves. When prana does not move then chitta stays still. so, by restraining the vayu the yogi attains steadiness.

If the nadis are full of impurities, the vital force does not pass in the middle channel. When the prana does not move into the middle channel then the attainment of perfection become difficult. So, pranayama remove the impurities in the nadis, the impurities are waste and residue of sensuous living and desires.

Sahita Kumbhakas are of eight kinds, known as famously ashtakumbhakas. Those are:-

SURYABHEDANA, UJJAYI, SEETKARI, SEETALI, BHASTRIKA, BHRAMARI, MOORCHA, PLAVINI.

The main objective of Hathayoga is to canalize, retain and unite the two types of prana – *prana and apana*. For this purpose, the practitioner has to train and close various *openings* in the body through which *prana* might escape. This is done by means of muscular contractions called *mudra* [seals] and *bandha* [locks]. With the help of *mudra* and *bandha*, the *prana* and *apanavayu*, which ordinarily move upward and downward, are moved in opposite directions effecting their **union** [yoga] within the *susumnanadi*. The heat [agni] generated by this *union* releases the bonds of vital energy called *kundalini shakti*.

The third chapter of HathayogaPradipika elaborately deals with different types of *mudras and bandhas*

And *mudra and bandha* help to bring such effective control over the movement of prana energy. The chapter deals with **three bandhas and ten mudras**.

2.10 QUESTIONS

1. Explain the role and importance of kriyas to maintain health?
2. Describe method and benefits of shat kriyas?

3. Explain the role of Dhouti kriya to eliminate kapha dosha?
4. The role of Ahara in the progress of pranayama practice?
5. Write an essay on Prana and Upa pranas?
6. Describe the method and benefits of Nadi Suddhi pranayama?
7. Explain about the Asta Kumbhakas ?
8. Write the therapeutic aspects of pranayama?
9. Define mudra and explain method and benefits of viparetkarani mudra?
10. Define Bandha and explain method and benefits of Jalandharabandha?
