

## **BENEFITS OF YOGASANA AND PRANAYAMA FOR PROFESSIONALS**

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In modern times, yoga has gained immense popularity as a means of promoting physical health, reducing stress and anxiety, and improving overall wellbeing. Many people practice yoga regularly as a form of exercise, relaxation, for developing growth mind set and spiritual growth. Yoga is self-help techniques to improvise our personality in totality.

"The pandemic has revealed the true importance of yoga, guiding professionals and youth through challenging times, development of resilience, and nurturing holistic well-being."

Yoga is not just physical exercise but according to sage Patanjali, is a system of practices designed to help individuals attain mindfulness from suffering and achieve a state of inner peace and harmony. Sage Patanjali is considered the father of modern yoga and his Yoga Sutras, written over 2,000 years ago, are the foundational text of classical yoga.

The Yoga Sutras outline an eight-limbed path (Ashtanga) of yoga, which includes ethical guidelines, physical postures, asanas, breath control (pranayama), sensory withdrawal (pratyahara), concentration (dharana), meditation (dhyana), and a state of transcendence (samadhi).

In this article we are focussing on Yogasana & Pranayama

**YOGASANA AND PRANAYAMA, WHICH ARE TWO IMPORTANT COMPONENTS OF ASHTANGA YOGA OF SAGE PATANJALI CAN HAVE SEVERAL BENEFITS FOR PROFESSIONALS. HERE ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS:**



**Reduced Stress:** Yogasana and pranayama can help reduce stress levels by promoting relaxation and calming the mind. This can be particularly helpful for professionals who often experience high levels of stress due to work-related demands.

**Improved Focus and Concentration:** Practicing yoga can help improve focus and concentration by reducing distractions and increasing mental clarity. This can help professionals perform better at work and stay focused on their tasks.

**Enhanced Physical Fitness:** Yogasana can help improve physical fitness by increasing strength, flexibility, and balance. This can help professionals maintain good health and energy levels, which can be important for performing well at work.

**Better Breathing:** Pranayama involves breathing exercises that can help improve lung capacity and oxygenation. This can help professionals feel more alert and energetic, which can be important for staying productive and energetic at work. Pranayama helps to improvise Vital Energy

**Improved Emotional Well-being:** Practicing yoga can help improve emotional well-being by reducing anxiety and depression and promoting feelings of positivity and well-being. This can help professionals maintain a positive outlook and cope better with work-related stressors.

**Improved Posture:** Sitting for long periods can lead to poor posture, which can cause discomfort and pain. Yogasana can help improve posture by strengthening the muscles that support the spine and promoting alignment of the spine. This can help reduce discomfort and pain associated with poor posture.

**Reduced Neck and Shoulder Tension:** Sitting for long periods can also cause tension in the neck and shoulders. Yogasana can help reduce this tension by stretching and strengthening the muscles in these areas.

**Increased Energy and Focus:** Practicing yoga at work can help increase energy levels and improve focus. This can be particularly helpful for professionals who may experience fatigue or difficulty concentrating due to prolonged sitting.

**Improved Circulation:** Prolonged sitting can lead to reduced circulation in the legs and feet, which can cause discomfort and increase the risk of certain health problems. Yogasana can help improve circulation by stretching and strengthening the muscles in these areas.

## **PRACTICING YOGA AT WORK CAN HAVE NUMEROUS BENEFITS FOR PROFESSIONALS**

Overall, practicing yoga at work can have numerous benefits for professionals who have jobs that require sitting for long periods of time. By promoting physical and mental well-being, yoga can help professionals stay healthy, focused, and productive at work.

**Take Breaks:** It's important to take regular breaks throughout the day to stretch, move around, and give the eyes a rest from the computer screen. This can help reduce the risk of discomfort and fatigue associated with prolonged sitting.

When we focus intensely on a task, such as working on a computer or reading for extended periods, we tend to blink less frequently. This can lead to dry eyes, eye strain, and fatigue, which may contribute to feelings of stress. Taking regular breaks and consciously blinking can help refresh your eyes, alleviate discomfort, and indirectly contribute to reducing stress.

**Practice Mindfulness:** Mindfulness practices, such as meditation and deep breathing exercises, can help reduce stress and increase focus and productivity. Taking a few minutes each day to practice mindfulness can have significant benefits for overall well-being. Deep breathing exercises, Taking slow, deep breaths can activate the body's relaxation response and help reduce stress.

**Stay Hydrated:** Staying hydrated is important for maintaining physical and mental well-being. Keeping a water bottle at the desk and drinking water throughout the day can help ensure adequate hydration. Moving from your desk to get water allows you to break up prolonged sitting and promotes blood circulation. It helps prevent stiffness and discomfort associated with sitting for long periods.

**Prioritize Comfort Design:** Ensuring that the workspace is set up in an ergonomically correct manner can help reduce the risk of discomfort and pain associated with prolonged sitting. This includes adjusting the chair, keyboard, and monitor to promote good posture.

**Pranayama practices involve breath control, are typically learned systematically under the guidance of an experienced teacher or practitioner.**

**While basic breath awareness and deep breathing exercises can be easily incorporated into daily life,**

**Overall, incorporating practices into the workday can help promote physical and mental well-being, reduce stress, and increase productivity and job satisfaction.**

## HERE IS A SIMPLE HAND STRETCH EXERCISE WITH DEEP BREATHING THAT CAN BE DONE IN A SEATED POSITION:

Sit up straight in your chair with your feet flat on the floor. Extend your arms out in front of you and interlock your fingers, palms facing away from your body. As you inhale, raise your arms up towards the ceiling, keeping your fingers interlocked

Hold the stretch for a few seconds, focusing on feeling the stretch in your shoulders, arms, and hands and spinal cord. As you exhale, slowly lower your arms back down to your lap. Release your hands and shake them out gently. Take a deep breath in and exhale slowly, allowing your body to relax.



Repeat this exercise a few times, inhaling as you raise your arms up and exhaling as you lower them down. This exercise can help relieve tension and stiffness in the shoulders, arms, and hands that can occur from prolonged computer use or sitting at a desk for long periods of time. Deep breathing during the exercise can also help promote relaxation and reduce stress.

## NECK MOVEMENT: UP AND DOWN

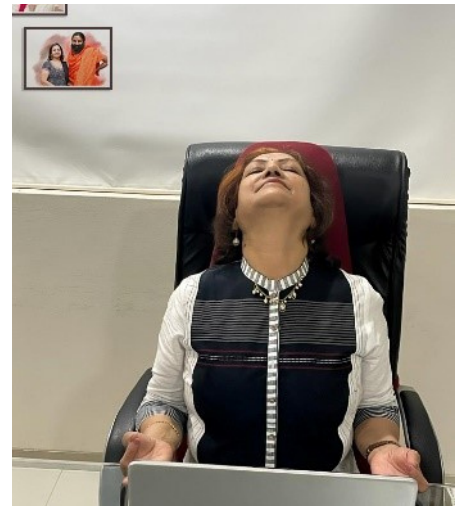


Sit up straight in a comfortable position, either on a chair. Relax your shoulders and let your arms rest comfortably by your sides. Begin by slowly inhaling and lengthening your spine. As you exhale, gently lower your chin towards your chest, allowing your neck to relax and stretch. Hold this position for a few seconds, feeling the gentle stretch in the back of your neck.

On your next inhale, slowly lift your head back up to a neutral position, keeping your chin parallel to the ground. As you exhale, gradually tilt your head back, gently looking upward towards the ceiling. Hold this position for a few seconds, feeling the stretch in the front of your neck.

On your next inhale, slowly bring your head back to a neutral position. Repeat this up and down movement of your neck several times, moving slowly and comfortably with your breath.

Remember to perform the movements slowly and mindfully, without forcing or straining your neck. This simple up and down neck movement can help relieve tension, improve flexibility, and promote relaxation in the neck and upper back area. If you experience any discomfort or pain, it is important to stop and consult with a healthcare professional.



## **SUMMARY**

To summarise Yoga is not limited to a mere exercise routine; it is a way of life that encourages self-awareness, mindfulness, and the cultivation of inner peace. It promotes self-discovery, self-acceptance, and personal growth, allowing individuals to develop a deeper connection with themselves and the world around them.

So, yoga lies in its holistic approach to health and wellbeing, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human existence. By practicing yoga, individuals can cultivate greater self-awareness, develop inner strength and resilience, and learn to live in harmony with themselves and the world around them.

Ultimately, the practice of yoga is about finding balance, reducing suffering, and cultivating a sense of unity, both within ourselves and with the larger universe. It can be adapted to suit individual needs and can be practiced by people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Yoga is not just about physical postures but also about self-exploration and self-discovery. It encourages professionals to embark on a personal journey of self-reflection, inner growth, and self-care through the practice of yoga. By engaging in yoga, professionals can cultivate a deeper understanding of themselves, find balance amidst the demands of work, and nurture their overall well-being.

***"Yoga is the journey of the self, through the self, to the self." - The Bhagavad Gita***

## **ABOUT DR SUNANDA S RATHI**

**Dr. Sunanda S Rathi** is a versatile individual with a diverse educational background. She holds a graduate degree in Law and a post-graduation degree in Commerce. Alongside her legal and commerce qualifications, she has extensive experience in the fields of communication management, business administration, and yoga. She has keen interest in the subject of Astrology.



In 1990, Dr. Rathi obtained her Ph.D. in Communication Management from Pune University. Subsequently, she pursued a Ph.D. in Yoga from Svyasa Bangalore, a renowned yoga university, completing it in 2020. Her doctoral research focused on exploring the "Effect of Integrated Approach of Yoga Therapy on Adolescent Obesity."

As the founder Director of Chiranjiv Foundation - Yoga Education & Research Institute, Dr. Rathi has been instrumental in promoting the practice and study of yoga. She has organized and conducted Stress Management and Yoga programs in corporate settings in Pune. Additionally, she has organized various camps in Maharashtra as part of the Stop Diabetes initiative and conducted the Yoga for Integrated Diabetes Management program for the Stop Diabetes Movement.

Dr. Rathi's contributions to the field of yoga have earned her recognition and accolades. She has been appointed as a Senior Research Fellow for the project of Yoga & Diabetes and Multi-Centric Research Study by the Indian Yoga Association, with support from the Ministry of AYUSH. Furthermore, she serves as a member of the Scientific Advisory Research Committee of Pune University and is involved in developing content for web series and online credit courses across various streams.

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