

# WHY DO WE HAVE TO PRACTICE YOGA

## ॐ Sri Gurubhyo Namah

Yoga is an applied science, if practiced regularly; it enlightens our lives like a Guru (dispeller of Darkness). It is impossible to enumerate the unlimited benefits Yoga bestows on the Sadhaka (Practitioner). Whatever may be our problem, it can be solved with the practice of Yoga. It is useful for people of all walks of life and of all ages. Here are some of the benefits one can get by practicing Yoga.

- **Best Exercise for physical fitness:** The yoga asanas and pranayamas can keep us physically fit, more effectively in lesser time when compared to any other fitness regime. We don't need any equipment, much space or facilities for the practice of Yoga, just we need a 6X2 feet space and a mat / blanket. A 30 minutes practice can keep us in good physical fitness.
- **Removing of toxins from our body:** We are living in a highly polluted environment, in cities it is even more. Even the food we are eating is containing heavy toxins, which are a major cause of many diseases, including Cancer. By regular practice of Yoga we can remove these toxins from our body and made us healthier.
- **Improving the functioning of the brain:** By the practice of Yoga the brain gets more Prana, which in turn improves the function of our brain. It improves our memory power, concentration, clarity in thinking and conceptual understanding. We know that these things are very important in all walks of life and in all ages. When these functions are improved, we can perform our duties in a faster phase, whether it is study, office work or household work, and get more free time for other activities.
- **Getting rid of lifestyle diseases:** The glandular system in the human body is responsible for maintaining it in good health by timely release of required secretions (Hormones etc.). If the functions of any of our glands are impaired; whether due to foods we eat, unhealthy habits, sedentary life or inborn defects, we are prone to be affected by lifestyle diseases. By practicing Yoga regularly, one can keep his glandular system in perfect condition and thus become disease free.

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- To face the challenges of life and to live stress free: Competition is the word of the day, it is there in studies, work, business and in all walks of life. By practicing the Astanga Marg Yoga of Maharishi Pathanjali, one can get rid of the stress and live in joy and happiness.

## HOW TO PREPARE ONESELF FOR THE PRACTICE OF YOGA

When we understand the benefits of yoga for physical, mental and spiritual wellness and improvement, we decide to make the yoga practice a part of our daily routine. It is in the human nature, that once we decided to do or perform certain activity, we plan how to do it, whether consciously or unconsciously. If the planning is in the right track, it is very easy to perform the task otherwise we fail to achieve the required results. For performing any task we need to have a lucid plan and Yoga is not an exception.

The first and foremost step in planning our yoga schedule is deciding on the extent of time we wanted to allocate for yoga practice and the time of the day. It is highly advisable to have a fixed time of the day for the practice of Yoga, preferably early morning, one - one and half hour before dawn. This is the time the air is fresh and the surroundings would be calm and serene. The mind would be fresh after a good night sleep.

Once decided on the time of the day for practice, one should plan the detailed schedule of practice based on the end results one is expecting. That is, whether only for fitness, overall physical and mental health or for spiritual enlightenment. In any case certain things are important to be followed such as arranging the practice area and have a positive bent of mind.

The place selected for practice of Yoga should be free from dirt and dust with good ventilation for free flow of fresh air. Arrange your seat facing East or North. Before starting the session, remember the Yamas and Niyamas and re-affirm yourself for following them.

The five Yamas are:

Ahimsa or Non-violence

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Satya or Truthfulness  
Asteya or Non-stealing  
Brahmacharya or Centeredness  
Aparigraha or Non-possessiveness

**The five Niyamas are:**

Saucha or Purity  
Santosha or Contentment  
Tapas or Spiritual Passion and Fire  
Svadhya or Self-study and Mastery  
Isvara Pranidhana or Surrender to Universal Self

Take a vow that you will practice yoga for at least for a period of 45 days without interruption, to get visible benefits out of it. Whatever system of Yoga one follows should be consistent with that system for a considerable period to get better results. Do not experiment or try to alter Asanas, Pranayamas or Bija mantras, because; you may not know the effects they may result in. Strictly follow the instructions given by your Guru / instructor and in case of doubts consult them before practicing. Be in touch with your Instructor and review your practice periodically for better results. Do not blame Yoga or Your Instructor if do not get the promised results, just check whether you are doing as prescribed in terms of precision and time. In case if you are not satisfied with the explanations given by your instructor for poor results, consult a more senior Instructor of the same system to clear your doubts. Always remember that you are doing yoga for your own benefits and not to impress somebody or show off. The results may differ from person to person, so don't discourage yourself if you don't get the same results as some other person gets in the same period.

**Welcome to the path of Yoga ~ you get what you desired**

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