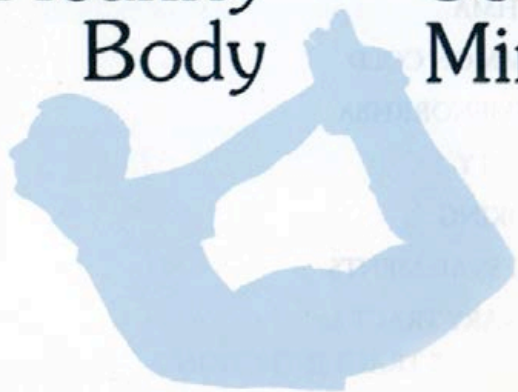




Healthy and Sound Body Mind



HEALTHY BODY AND SOUND MIND

What can be more distressing than seeing one's own children suffer due to ill health? And they seem to be falling sick all the time. While in school, they come in close contact with a large number of children; if one child is infected with a contagious disease, be it cough, flu, mumps or conjunctivitis, almost everybody else follows suit. By the time one disease subsides, another surfaces, claiming as many victims; and the crisis continues.

Infections are not the only cause of diseases in children. Stress is a major factor too. In one study, twelve per cent of the students of a school were found to have high blood pressure – the most visible effect of stress. Other common problems in children that may originate from this evil are asthma, stammering, bed-wetting and irritable bowel syndrome.

Another cause of ailments in children is environmental pollutants that get into a child's system in various ways. The water they drink contains forty different harmful chemicals, the food they eat is full of preservatives, colours, and pesticide residues; and the air they breathe has many poisonous gases and impurities. Though the liver is empowered to eliminate all unwanted elements from the system, it cannot do the job effectively when there are too many pollutants to handle. The excess toxins find their way into the body cells and slowly poison the tissues making them weak and diseased. Cancer is thought to be the outcome of excessive toxins and tension in the system. Almost all cancer patients are found to have a weak liver and a study revealed

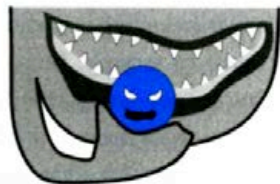


that most of them had a series of traumatic experiences six to eighteen months prior to the onset of the disease.

Conventional therapy uses powerful antibiotics and other drugs to treat diseases. There is no doubt that they provide immediate relief, but they eventually end up harming the system, because these are chemical drugs that add to the existing toxins, making a body's internal environment more poisonous. As a result, the immune system becomes weak making the body susceptible to hordes of infections. Sometimes the drugs may not work at all as the microbes develop resistance to them. Many a death has occurred due to an infection contracted in a hospital where the microbes that are exposed to various drugs develop immunity. Furthermore, in conventional therapy, only the symptoms are alleviated, not the cause. For example, in hypothyroidism, where the thyroid gland secretes insufficient thyroxin leading to slow metabolism that results in various problems including obesity, this hormone is administered to fill up the deficiency; but nothing is done to normalise the functioning of the thyroid gland. The gland becomes progressively weaker and modern science has no means to strengthen it.

Yoga on the other hand, is a time-tested science that aims at rejuvenating all the glands and organs in the body ensuring their efficient functioning. It makes the immune system robust and a strong immune system can ward off all infections. In the past, when there were no effective drugs for diseases like plague, cholera and T.B.,

millions of people died, but millions also survived despite being exposed to the same microbes. It was only because their immune system fought the invaders and won. An efficient immune system can also detect and devour abnormal body cells which may have turned cancerous at a later stage.



Strong immune cells devour all invaders and potential cancer cells

To attain and maintain perfect physical and mental health, yoga has various techniques such as *asanas*, *pranayama*, *shatkarma* (cleansing techniques), meditation and *yoganidra*, i.e. yogic sleep. *Asanas* are of two types, dynamic and static. The dynamic *asanas* speed up blood circulation, exercise muscles and squeeze stored toxins out of the body tissues for *shatkarmas* to wash them out. Static *asanas*, on the other hand, carry more blood and *prana* (the vital bio-current) to target areas to heal and energise weak body parts. Simultaneously, stress is eliminated from the mind through meditation, *yoganidra*, music and chants. Specific techniques affect specific body parts and must be chosen carefully to attain the desired result. For example, a child with a family history of diabetes needs to include practices that strengthen the pancreas, while, children of heart patients must include those that are meant for the heart, to avoid acquiring these hereditary diseases in the future. But *Suryanamaskar* and *Nadisodhan pranayama* are the most essential yogic practices that should be included in all yogic routines.

Acne generally subsides once a teenager steps into adulthood, but in some cases, it persists even into the thirties. Acne may not be a health hazard, but the sight of patchy, unbecoming skin can be quite daunting for a young mind, leading to various psychological problems. Children may become shy, self-conscious and low on self esteem. Sometimes the problem can be very deep and scar their psyche permanently.

Yogic remedy for acne is simple but should be used as a preventive, not as a curative measure, because once the skin acquires deep scars and open pores, yoga can do precious little to rectify the condition. Meditation and *asanas* such as *Kandhrasana* normalise the overactive sebaceous gland decreasing oil production, while *Suryanamaskar* generates the necessary heat in the skin to melt and evacuate the stagnant sebum from the shaft.

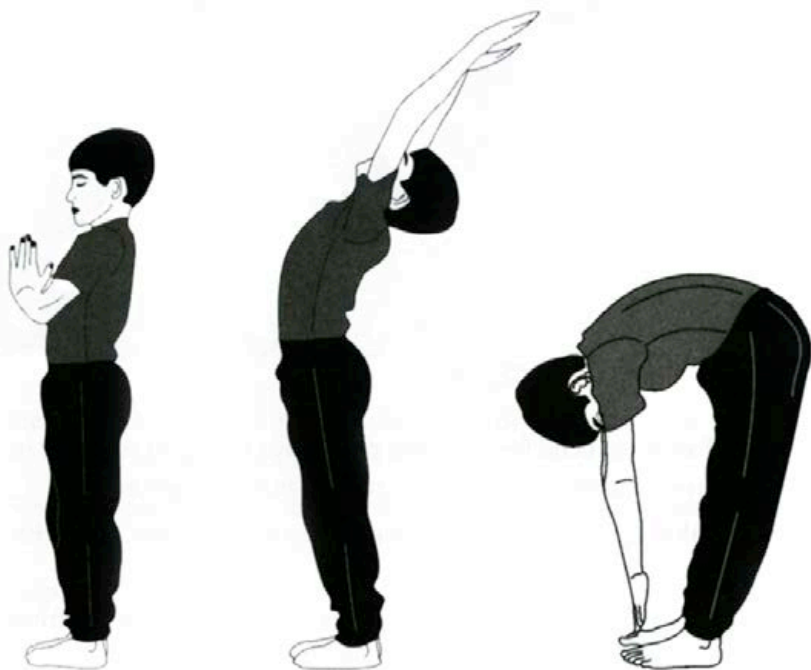


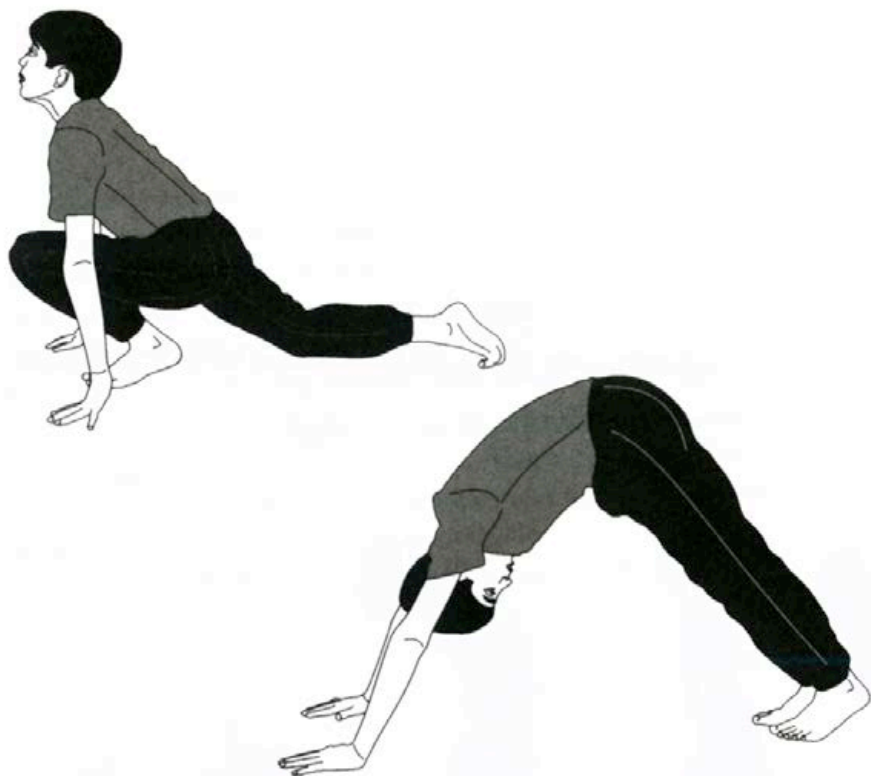
TECHNIQUE

Suryanamaskar

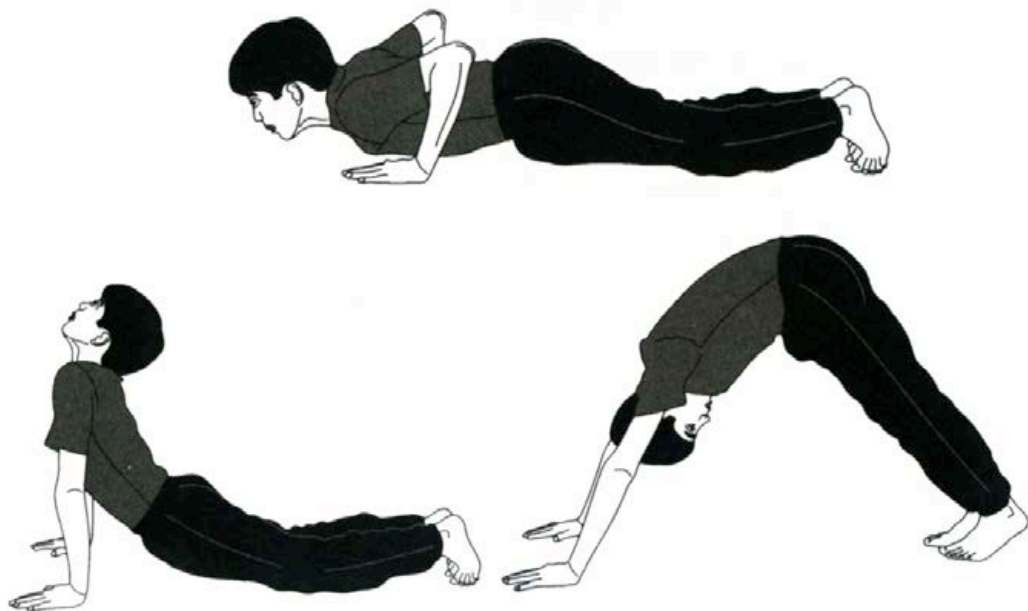
Step 1. Stand straight with hands folded in front of the chest.

Step 2. Inhaling, raise your arms and stretch as far back as possible.





- Step 3. Exhaling, bend forward and place your hands on the floor in front and outside of your feet. (Try not to bend the legs).
- Step 4. Inhaling, extend the right leg back and lower the hips with the head held back.
- Step 5. Exhaling, take the left leg back to join the feet, while lifting the hips up to form a triangle with your trunk.



Step 6. Holding your breath, lower your body to the floor. Only the hips should not touch the floor.

Step 7. Drop the hips, then inhaling, raise your trunk with the head held back.

Step 8. Exhaling, assume the posture in Step 5

Step 9. Inhaling, assume the posture in Step 4