

CHAPTER 2

yoga
at the age of five

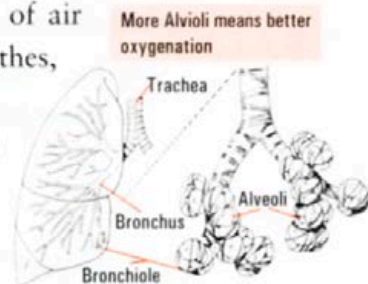


YOGA AT THE AGE OF FIVE

Focus: LUNGS

The human body is composed of trillions of cells, each of which needs oxygen every moment of the day, to live and to carry out its duties. Oxygen is absorbed into the blood and is carried to the cells by the blood, from the inhaled air in the lungs. The more the air in the lungs, the better is the oxygenation of the system. The amount of air one can inhale, depends not only on how one breathes, but also on the size and health of the lungs.

The lungs are made up of tiny air sacs called alveoli. It is here that the actual exchange of gases takes place—the more the number, the more air the lungs can hold. Alveoli growth stops after the age of eight, hence care should be taken for their maximum growth much before that age. The following yogic techniques are extremely effective for this purpose. These techniques also maintain the elasticity of the lungs allowing them to expand fully. With better health of the lungs, the general health of a child improves, preventing various ailments especially of the respiratory system, including asthma.



YOGIC PROGRAMME

SIMHASANA

Technique:

- Kneel down.
- Sit on your heels.
- Move the knees apart.
- Place hands on the floor, in between the knees, with the fingers towards you.
- Throw the head back.
- Take a deep breath.
- Open the mouth wide.
- Stick tongue as far out as possible.
- Look up at the point in between the eyebrows.
- Make the sound *aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa* and expel air from the lungs well.
- Close the mouth and relax your eyes.
- Repeat 10 times.



MAKARASANA

This asana strengthens not only the lungs but also the back.

Technique:

- Lie down on your stomach.
- Prop yourself up, cupping the chin with the hands.
- Adjust the position of the elbows till you can feel pressure on the mid-back. Remain in this posture for five minutes.

Makarasana can be done as many times and for as long as one wants (in case of an adult, the duration should be increased gradually).



PADMASANA (LOTUS POSE)

Padmasana is known as the destroyer of diseases. It can be done any time and any number of times during the day.

Technique:

- Sit on the floor.
- Put the right foot on the left thigh, and left foot on the right thigh. Place hands on the knees.
- Sit in this position for as long as you can.



BHRAMARI

Bhramari is a yogic breathing technique or *pranayama*. It expels stale air from the lungs and fills them with fresh oxygenated air. It also soothes and strengthens the nerves.

Technique:

- Sit in *Padmasana* position or just cross the legs.
- Close ears with the index fingers and make a humming sound.
- Repeat 10 times.

A child of five may not be able to do this perfectly. But he will benefit even if he does it to whatever extent he can.

