



An asana is a posture. There are innumerable postures our body can take. Among these, certain postures have been identified as Yoga Asanas. "Yoga" means that which takes you on to a higher dimension or higher perception of life. So, that kind of posture which leads you to a higher possibility is called a "Yogasana."

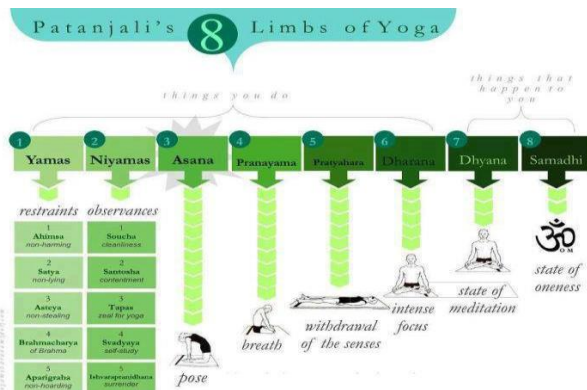
ASANA

Third limb of Patanjali's **Ashtanga Yoga** and First in **Hatha Yoga**. It has come from the Sanskrit root word "**Asa bhuvi**" which means -
- **to be / to stay / to exist**

Definition of ASANA

Patanjali defines asana as:

'Sthirsukham asanam'



Sthira - Sukham - Asanam

Steady / Stable and Comfortable body posture

1. Asanas are to gain stability or freedom from instability or fickleness

Origin & Naming of ASANA

1. There are **84** classic YogAsanas
2. The **Goraksha Samhita** says there are as many postures as there are beings, and asserting that there are around **8,400,000** species
3. The **Hatha Yoga Pradipika** - there are **84** Asanas, the first **four** are important Asanas are - Siddhasna, Padmasana, Bhadrasana & Simhasana

The naming of Asanas shows the learning capacity of human mind and also shows:



- Significant Illustration of the principle of evolution
- Mind is trained NOT to despise any creature
- Ultimately helps to induce Unity in diversity
- From the lowest insect to the most perfect sage, there breathes the same Universal spirit

TYPES OF ASANAS

Broadly **TWO** types –

- **Dynamic Asanas** – Requires some movements to reach final posture. Example: Halasana, Ardhamatsyendra asana. Less holding.
- **Static Asanas** – Requires minimum movements to reach final pose. Example: Sukhasna, Padmasna. Holding is more.

Another classification of ASANAS

- **Forward bending Asanas**
- **Backward bending Asanas**
- **Balancing Asanas**
- **Twisting Asanas**
- **Inverted Asanas**

Guidelines for Practicing Yogasana

1. Begin the yoga session with some warm up Asans/poses.
2. Menstruation, pregnancy, high blood pressure and injuries to the knees, shoulders, and neck are all conditions where certain postures must be avoided and special care must be taken in all postures.
3. Wear clothing that is comfortable and that does not restrict your breathing or movements.
4. Avoid consuming any food 3 hours prior to yoga practice. A cup of light tea, milk, juice or a fruit is acceptable 30 minutes before practice.
5. Do yoga preferably in the morning when your mind is relatively calmer and the energy levels are higher in contrast to the evening.
6. Do not strain yourself or push yourself beyond your capacity.
7. Do not forget to breathe while practicing poses as breathing is an important part of yoga.
8. Yoga should be done with full awareness. The key is to constantly remind ourselves to be aware of the poses and breathing and to bring our wandering mind back to focus on the moment.
9. Drink plenty of water to help in the elimination of toxins from the body that have been released as a result of the practice session.
10. Be consistent in your practice. Make it your goal not to miss a single day, unless you are sick.

BENEFITS OF ASANA

1. Asanas produce **Stability** at the level of **Body, Breath & Mind**
2. Helps to overcome duality of mind
3. An asana is a dynamic way of meditating. Because you cannot sit still, you do something else to become meditative.

4. Regular practice of Asanas has many effects on the human body by: **Massaging** both the skeletal & organic muscles, **stretching** of muscles, tendons, ligaments, **Contraction & Compression** of various body parts. Certain Asanas bring an effect of **Relaxation**.
5. Improves digestion by regularizing metabolism & peristaltic movements.
6. Breathing capacity & breath-holding time increases
7. Sleep quality and Immunity are improved
8. Asanas DO stimulate endocrine glands to function better
9. Self-acceptance and self-actualization increases
10. Anxiety and depression decreases
11. Yoga Asanas work at Preventive, Curative and Promotive level

FUTURE EVENT

- **WORKSHOP – YOGA FOR DEPRESSION on 21th October (WEDNESDAY) 2015, 5:00 – 7:30 pm at ICC Yoga Hall.**
- **FULL MOON MEDITATION on 27th October (Tuesday) 2015 at #254, ANTON DRAGTENWEG 7 pm – 8:30 pm. (Please Bring your Yoga Mat with You)**

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