CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE AND RESEARCH AIIMS, NEW DELHI

शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम्

YOGA NIDRA

Instruction Booklet





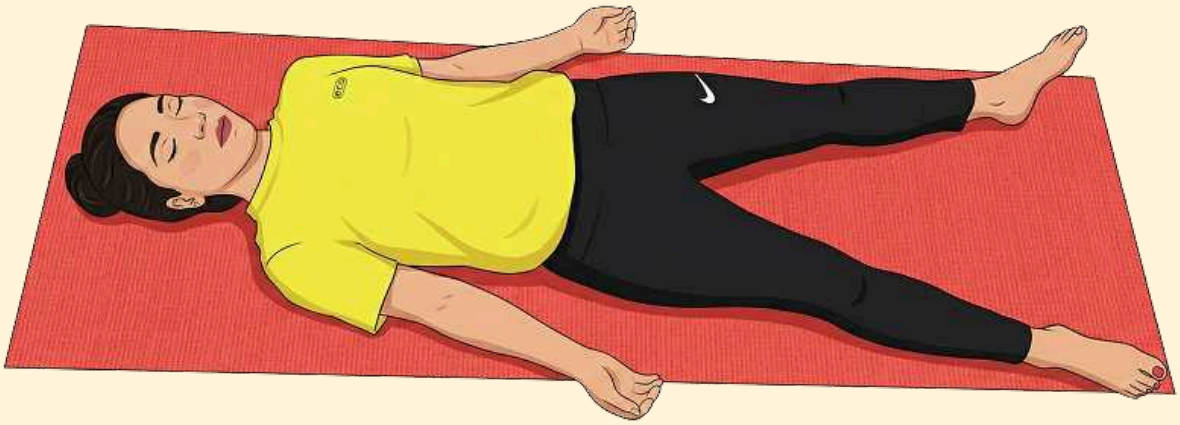

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapters	Pages
Guidelines	01
The Practice of Yoga Nidra	02
Cautions	07
References	08



DISCLAIMER

Kindly consult your treating physician before practicing these techniques. Ideally, they should be performed under the supervision of your physician and a formally trained yoga teacher. These practices should be started gradually and can be modified according to individual needs.

GUIDELINES

Before the Practice

- Yoga should be practiced in a clean and quiet atmosphere.
- Yoga should be practiced on an empty stomach or light stomach. Eat at least 2-3 hours before practice.
- Bladder and Bowel should be empty before starting the practice.
- Light and comfortable clothes are preferred to facilitate the easy movements of the body.
- In case of any shortness of breath/chest pain/giddiness, please consult the Yoga physician prior to practice.

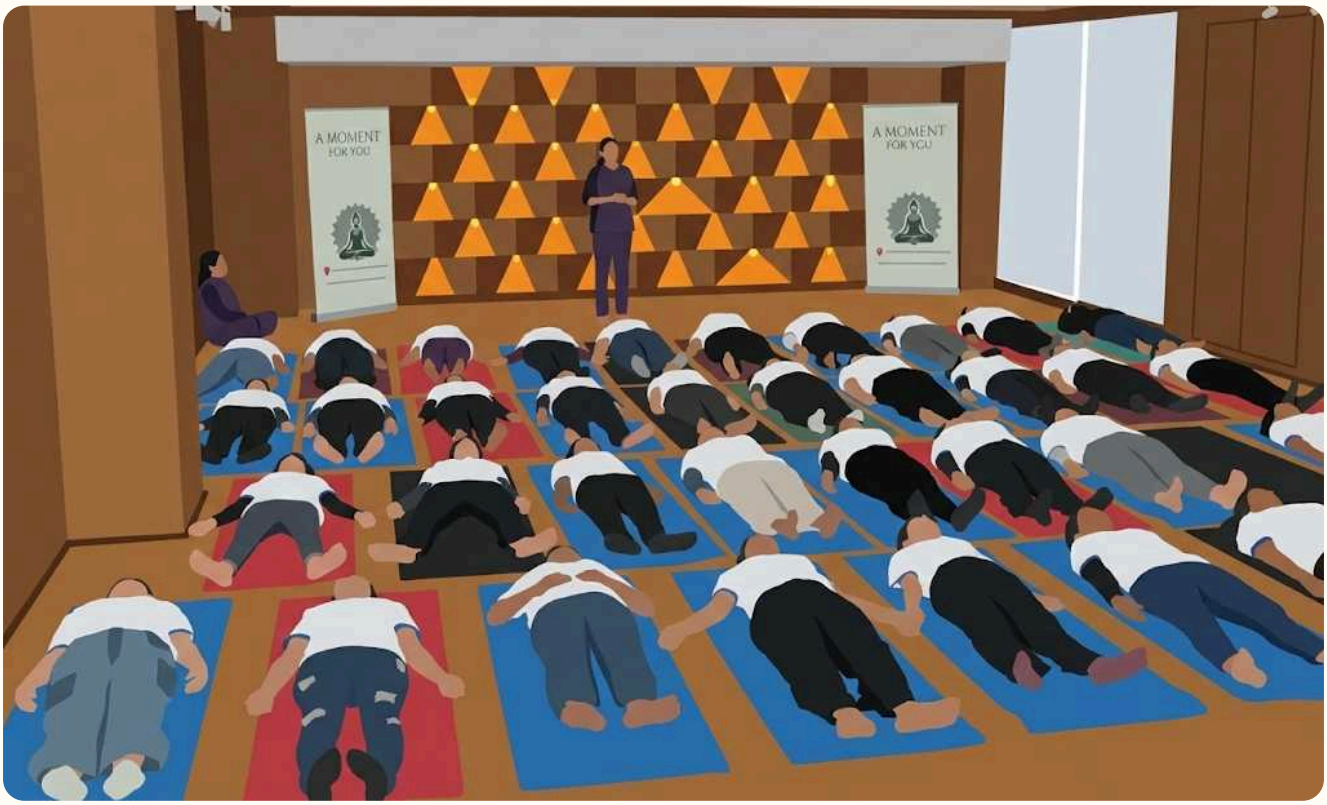
During the Practice

- All practices should be done slowly, in a relaxed manner, with awareness of body and breathing.
- Always breathe from nostrils and avoid holding breath in any practice.
- Avoid holding of the body tightly or jerky movements at any time.
- Perform according to your capacity. Regularity is a more important factor here.
- In case of having difficulty while sitting down on the floor for a long duration, one can use a chair.
- In case of any breathing difficulty/discomfort/blurred vision during the practice, stop the practice immediately and inform the therapist.

After the Practice

- Take bath before/after 20-30 minutes of practice.
- Eat only after 30 minutes of practice.

THE PRACTICE OF YOGA NIDRA



- Please get ready for the practice of Yoga Nidra.
- Lie down comfortably in Shavasana.
- Adjust your blanket, clothes, and position so that you can practice Yoga Nidra without any movement.
- Keep your feet slightly apart, arms beside the body with the palms facing up, and head in a straight line with the spinal cord.
- Now gently close your eyes.
- Keep your eyes closed and become aware of your whole body.
- Whole body from the toes to the top of the head is to be seen mentally, felt mentally, and relaxed mentally.
- This practice of Yoga Nidra is an act of hearing and an act of feeling.
- Once the practice begins, do not move. Simply surrender your whole body to the floor.
- Observe your body. Mentally check each and every part of the body and if there is anything tight, the clothes, the belt, the wristwatch, please loosen them and relax the body.

THE PRACTICE OF YOGA NIDRA

- There should be no tightness in any part because it will eventually divert your attention from the practice to the feeling of discomfort.
- Make yourself totally comfortable.
- Check each and every part of the body.
- Loosen all the joints. Loosen all the tight parts. Relax the muscles.
- Surrender your whole body to the floor and feel the relaxation getting deeper and deeper and deeper.
- Do not sleep.
- As the relaxation becomes deep, sleep will come but you have to remain awake and alert throughout the practice of Yoga Nidra.
- Say to yourself mentally, “I will not sleep”, “I will not sleep”, “I will not sleep”.
- Give yourself time to become calm and steady.
- Take a deep breath in slowly and gently. As you breathe out feel the calmness spreading throughout the body.
- Now we begin the practice of yoga Nidra.
- Become aware of the sounds in the distance.
- Become aware of the most distant sound that you can hear. Let your sense of hearing operate like a radar beam, searching out distant sounds and following them for a few seconds.
- Listen closely and move your attention from sound to sound, don’t think about the source. Just be aware of each and every sound, that you can hear, that is within your hearing range.
- Become aware of all the different sounds that you can hear. Search out the sounds and follow them for a few seconds. Recognize them. Know that they are around you, and you can hear them.
- Sound of vehicles, the sound of nature, the sound of people, the sound of people talking, sounds inside your own body.
- Now develop your awareness of the room. Without opening the eyes visualize the four walls of the room, the ceiling, the floor, the body lying on the floor, see your body lying on the floor.

THE PRACTICE OF YOGA NIDRA

- Total awareness of the body lying in perfect stillness.
- Develop awareness of all the meeting points between your body and the floor. Awareness of the contact points between the body and the blanket.
- Do not sleep. Do not allow your awareness to waver from my instructions.
- Now, observe the natural incoming and outgoing breath. Observe the flow of natural breath in the body.
- Just focus on the breath; become aware of the spontaneous breath.
- Experience the movement, experience the flow of the breath in the body.
- Observe the gradual rise and fall of the abdomen at the time of inhalation and exhalation.
- Observe the expansion of the abdomen at the time of inhalation and relaxation of the abdomen at the time of exhalation.
- Become aware of the breath which is deep, natural, and spontaneous.
- Do not try to alter the rhythm, do not change the flow of your natural breath.
- Do not try to concentrate on the process of breathing. Just become an observer of the incoming and outgoing breath.
- Mentally see the expansion and relaxation of the abdomen as you breathe in and as you breath out.
- With each exhalation, experience the deepening of relaxation of the body.
- Do not sleep. Do not sleep. Do not move the body.
- Remind yourself that you are practicing Yoga Nidra. Say to yourself mentally, “I am practicing Yoga Nidra”.
- Do not sleep. Do not sleep.
- Now you have to make a Sankalpa, a resolve to yourself mentally. A simple positive resolve to yourself.
- Please repeat the Sankalpa clearly with complete feeling and awareness for 3 times.

THE PRACTICE OF YOGA NIDRA

- I am in a state of complete relaxation; physically, mentally, emotionally and in all the levels of existence.
- All the cells, tissues, and organs in my body are functioning at their full potential and in harmony with each other.
- I am in the state of complete health and wellbeing.
- Now, we are going to gradually move the awareness through different parts of the body.
- Move your consciousness through the different centers of the body as quickly as possible. The awareness has to move. The awareness has to jump from point to point, from one part of the body to the next according to my instructions.
- Now, I will be taking names of different parts of the body; for example, if I say right-hand thumb, then visualize in your mind the right-hand thumb. See the right-hand thumb in front of the closed eyes. Repeat mentally, right-hand thumb. Become completely aware of the right-hand thumb and relax completely the right hand thumb. Everything has to be done simultaneously and quickly.
- And then when I take the name of the second part of the body, move your attention to that part. And in this manner, we shall rotate our consciousness, our awareness, through the different parts of the body, starting from the right side of the body, then the left, then we will go to the back, and then to the front.
- Bring your awareness to the right-hand thumb, First finger, Second finger, third finger, fourth finger, four fingers, and thumb together, palm, back of the hand, right wrist, lower arm, elbow, upper arm, right shoulder, right armpit, right waist, right hip, right thigh, right knee, right calf muscle, right shin, right ankle, right heel, right sole, right big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, fifth toe, five toes together, the whole right side; the whole right side; the whole right side.
- Now bring your awareness to the left side of the body. Left-hand thumb, first finger, second finger, third finger, fourth finger, four fingers, and thumb together, palm, back of the hand, wrist, lower arm, elbow, upper arm, left shoulder, left armpit, left waist, left hip, left thigh, left knee, left calf muscle, left shin, left ankle, left heel, left sole, left big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, fifth toe, five toes together, the whole left side; the whole left side; the whole left side.

THE PRACTICE OF YOGA NIDRA

- Now bring your awareness to the back of the body. Right buttock, left buttock, right lower back, left lower back, right shoulder blade, left shoulder blade, the spinal cord, the neck, back of the head, top of the head, the whole back; the whole back; the whole back.
- Now bring your awareness to the front. The forehead; The forehead; The forehead; Right temple, left temple, right ear, left ear, right eyebrow, left eyebrow, the eyebrow center, right eye, left eye, bridge of the nose, right nostril, left nostril, the tip of the nose, right cheek, left cheek, upper lip, lower lip, chin, throat, right collar bone, left collar bone, right side of the chest, left side of the chest, depression of the chest, navel, abdomen, the whole front; the whole front; the whole front.
- Complete awareness of the whole body, the whole body, the whole body.
- Relax the whole body completely. Relax the whole body completely.
- And now gradually bring the attention to your surroundings, become aware of the sounds, sounds which you can hear, sounds which you can hear around you, externalize the consciousness, externalize the consciousness, awareness of the immediate environment.
- Once again, repeat your Sankalpa.
- Repeat your Sankalpa 3 times.
- Now slowly move your toes, fingers, neck. Join your feet, bring your arms closer to the body. Place your right arm above the head on the floor, bend your left knee, place your left hand on the abdomen. Slowly turn to your right side. Straighten your left leg. Complete body in a straight line. Now place your left hand in front of your chest on the floor. Taking support of both of your hands slowly get up and sit.
- Join your palms and start rubbing them to make them warm.
- Gently place them over your face, give some warmness to your eyes.
- Again, rub your palms and give warmness to your face, head, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, abdomen, back and legs.
- Again, join your palms in front of your chest like in Namaskara mudra. With a few blinks looking at the palms slowly open your eyes.
- The practice of Yoga Nidra is now over.

CAUTIONS

There are no reported contraindications of Yoga Nidra. However, individuals suffering from psychiatric illness should practice it with permission of their treating Physician, under the supervision of a Yoga Expert. Yoga nidra appears to be a simple practice but if practiced with sincerity and awareness has neuro-physiological and psychological benefits.

Yog Nidra is best practised under the supervision of a yoga expert. It can also be routinely done with the help of recorded instructions.



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|| लोकः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु||

"Let the entire world be happy."

