

Garudasana (Eagle Posture)

This asana is named after the well-known bird Garuda (eagle). In this asana, the hands with arms placed in front look like the beak of an eagle.

Method:

Stand erect with feet together, hands by the sides of the thighs.

- * Balancing on the left foot, raise the right leg, bend the right knee and wrap it around left leg.
- * **Entwine** the forearms keeping the left elbow remaining below. Keep the palms together in front. Keep trunk as erect as possible and maintain the posture for 18 to 20 seconds.
- * Release arms. Put the right foot down on the floor.
- * Come to the starting position. Repeat it by changing the position of legs and arms.



Benefits

- It helps to loosen the joints of legs and arms.
- This asana helps to give static stretching of the muscles of upper and lower parts.
- It enhances concentration.
- It develops balance in the body.

Limitation

- Those suffering from muscular pain, spasm, injuries of bones and joints should not practice it.

Vajrasana

This is a meditative posture. It is the only *asana* which can be practiced immediately after taking meals

Method:

Sit with legs extended together, hands by the side of the body, resting on the ground.

- * Fold the left leg at the knee and place the foot under the left buttock.
- * Similarly, fold the right leg and place the foot under the right buttock. *
- Place both the heels so that the big toes overlap each other.
- * Position the buttocks in the space between the heels.
- * Keep the hands on respective knees.
- * Keep spine erect, gaze in front or close the eyes. Initially you can stay for 10– 15 seconds.
- * While returning to the original position, bend a little towards right side, take out your left leg and extend it.
- * Similarly, extend your right leg and keep arms on the sides of the body. Return to the original position.



Benefits

- It is a meditative posture and helps in concentration.
- It improves our digestive system.
- This strengthens muscles of thighs and calf.

Limitations

Those suffering from chronic knee pain should not practise *Vajrasana*.

Uttanapadasana

Utt na means raised-upward and P da means leg. In this sana, the legs are raised upward in supine position, hence the name.

Method:

- * Lie comfortably on the ground with legs stretched out. Hands should be placed by the sides.
- * While inhaling, slowly raise both the legs without bending them at the knees and bring them to 30° angle with the ground.
- * Maintain the position for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- * Exhale, slowly bring both the legs down and place them on the ground.
- * Relax in av sana.



Benefits:

- It is beneficial in constipation, indigestion, nervous weakness and diabetes.
- It strengthens the abdominal muscles.
- It balances the navel centre (Nabhimandal).

Limitations:

- Do not practice with both legs if suffering from back pain complaints.

Naukasana

Nauka in Sanskrit means 'boat'. The final position of this asana resembles a boat, hence the name has been given Naukasana.

Method:

- Lie flat on the back. Keep the heels and feet together. The arms should be by the sides of the body and palms resting on the ground.
- * Inhaling slowly raise the legs. Simultaneously, raise the head and trunk upto 45°.
 - * Stretch and raise the arms up and maintain the position for 20-25 seconds.
 - * Exhaling slowly bring the head and trunk down on the floor.
 - * Slowly bring down the legs and arms on the floor and relax.



Benefits:

- * It stimulates digestive system.
- * It gives relief in gastric problems.
- * It removes lethargy resulting into improved concentration.
- * It removes nervous tension and brings relaxation.
- * It reduces fat around the waist and abdomen.

Limitation:

- * People suffering from hernia should not practice this *asana*.