

POSE OF THE MONTH

January 2007

Marichyasana C – Marichyasana C is a preparatory pose for Marichyasana D where the deeper internal cleansing occurs. It is the first seated twist in the Primary Series, these twisting postures (marichyasana C & D) have additional benefits outside of cleansing our colon. Twists are important asanas for spinal health; they keep the spine flexible (a rigid spine is more prone to injury as it can not absorb shock) and bring fresh blood supply to the spinal nerves. Twisting also has an effect on the abdominals, alternately stretching and contracting as you twist one way and then the other. Spinal twisting enhances prana flow all around the abdomen, nourishing the pancreas, kidneys, stomach, small intestines, liver, and gall bladder while compressing and squeezing out excess flatulence that becomes trapped and uncomfortable in the body.

Twisting should take place in the thoracic spine (where the ribs attach to the spine), the thoracic vertebrae are designed to twist. The lumbar spine is very good at forward and backward bending, but not at twisting so it is helpful to un-square the hips so as not to twist the lumbar spine, this will de-stabilize the spine, twisting should take place at the waist and above.

Twisting also stretches the intercostals (muscles between the ribs) freeing the breath in the ribs. Tight intercostals inhibit back bending, so twisting asanas will make back bending easier!

Method:

ॐ From Downward dog hop through to Dandasana.

ॐ Bend your right knee and bring the heel close to your right sitting bone (same placement as in Marichyasana A)

ॐ Place your right hand behind you close to your sitting bones (fingers pointing away from you), slide your left leg forward making your hips asymmetrical, try to keep your spine perpendicular to the floor, if your knee is flaring out (tightness in your hips) or your back is tight stay here in the pose, wrapping your arm around your leg, pull your ribs down and in, while lifting your heart, as you hug your body to your leg and twist to the right. (See picture of John)

ॐ If you can go further; as you exhale and twist to the right, try to clear your chest past your right thigh placing your left arm on the outer side of your right thigh—using

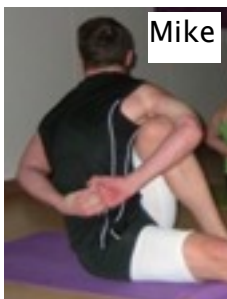
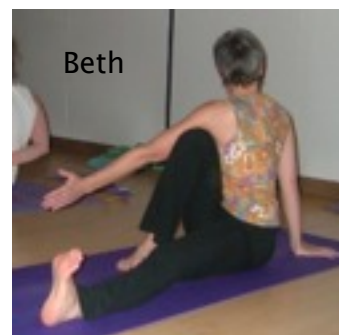
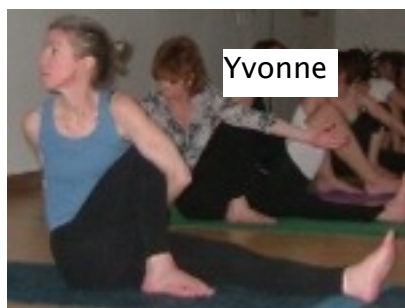
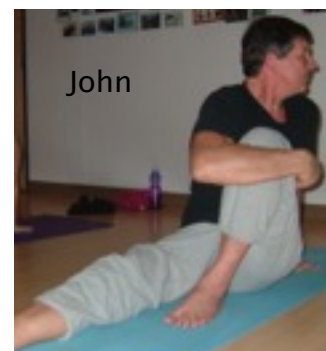
your arm to help you twist, however do not let your leg collapse across your body, keep your knee pointing upward to the ceiling. Pressing your underarm toward your thigh as close to your thigh as you can (ideally your arm, thigh, and torso should all be tight together with your left outer ribs touching your right thigh). You can stay here for the pose (See picture of Beth)

ॐ If you can go further, continue reaching your left arm around your right leg and shin, reach your right

arm around your back and try to clasp your hands for the bind. Once you bind you need to use your internal strength (a.k.a. bandhas) to sit tall—be careful not to collapse in your lower back. (See pictures of Yvonne and Mike.)

ॐ Complete the pose by looking over your right shoulder for the side drishti and out the right corners of your eyes. Pay attention to the left leg, do not let the foot and leg roll outward

ॐ Breathe deep! Stay here for 5 breaths. Sometimes breathing is difficult in twisting postures because the abdomen is compressed, as your flexibility increases and your abdomen twists clear of your thigh your breath will come easier.





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ॐ Exhaling turn your gaze to the front and take vinyasa or switch sides.

ॐ OH, and remember to smile.

Benefits:

The entire Marichyasana series cures gaseous movements in the stomach and intestines, with that flatulence, indigestion, and constipation are eliminated and digestive power is restored. These asana also directly benefit the kidneys. These poses relieve pain from menstruation and strengthen the womb allowing a woman to carry a child strongly, miscarriage due to weakness is cured, although pregnant women should not practice these asana after the second month of pregnancy. The Manipura chakra (third chakra) is purified and strengthened with these asana.



On the emotional and psychic levels of twisting represent a means of managing problems in our life, these asana give insight and inspire a systematic approach to untying the tangled knots of life!

For more information on the internal workings of the Marichyasana Series see information on Marichyasana B or D.