

POSE OF THE MONTH

September 2006

Janu Sirsasana B – Head to knee pose. Janu means knee, sirsa means head. This pose goes deeper than Janu Sirsasana A, and Janu Sirsasana A will help prepare your body to go a little deeper into the B position.

Method

- ☪ From Downward facing dog, hop through to Dandasana beginning to fold your right leg back as you come through.
- ☪ Exhaling bend your right knee and take your leg out to the side to approx. 85°. Externally rotate your thigh bone (femur)—meaning turn your inner thigh upward (this is the opposite of what we did in Janu Sirsasana A), flex or point your foot (which ever gets your heel to press up deeper into your perineum), then lift your hips up and slide forward to have a seat on your inner foot. Your heel should be in your perineum and your left sitting bone will be into the arch of your right foot.
- ☪ Catch your left foot with both hands (bending your left knee if necessary), inhale lift your heart and square your shoulders over the left thigh adding a slight “twisting” component to the pose.
- ☪ Exhale forward bend over your left thigh moving your forehead to knee, spiral your right ribs inward trying to keep both shoulders parallel to the floor. Slide your shoulder blades down your back and lengthen your spine and back of your neck, paying attention to stay connected with the bandhas by pulling the ribs in and together but not rounding your upper back.
- ☪ Drishti (gaze) is at your toes. Be careful not to put pressure on the nerves at the base of the skull by jutting your chin forward in effort to get more length in the pose or your head down.
- ☪ Hold here for five deep breaths, the pressure of your heel in your “mula bandha” should remind you to lift mula bandha! Inhaling come up, take vinyasa or switch legs.



Janu Sirsasana B puts an even more intense stretch on the hamstrings due to the elevation of the hips. Progress intelligently, many people initially avoid going deep into forward bending with this posture giving the body time to accept the new range of motion it is being put into.

Benefits

The Janu Sirsasana series of poses has a powerful effect on the urinary system and prostate gland. Of importance is the pressure from the heel placed on the nerve which stimulates the pancreas to make sufficient insulin, Janu Sirsasana A & B for men and C for women (although all three poses are beneficial for both sexes and should be practiced by all).

Janu Sirsasana B puts the heel in the perineum . . . in the raphe of the perineum to be exact -- a little seam in the perineum. In men, this raphe continues through the midline of the scrotum (scrotal raphe) and upwards through the posterior midline of the penis (penile raphe). In women it is the developmental equivalent of the labia.



The Perineum is given much attention in yogic texts as the seat of where our energy is stored and can either move or get stagnant -- the beauty of this English word (perineum) is probably derived from perennial, which means constant flow of energy, like a perennial river or flower. This region is between the anus and genitals, or between the anus and vegetables as I like to say ;)

This seam in yoga terms is known as the Shivani Nadi. In yoga mala it says as this nadi becomes stronger it heals all our tissues, known as the 7 dhatus, and cures diabetes. It also cures maladies such as burning during urination, semen loss, and erectile dysfunction.

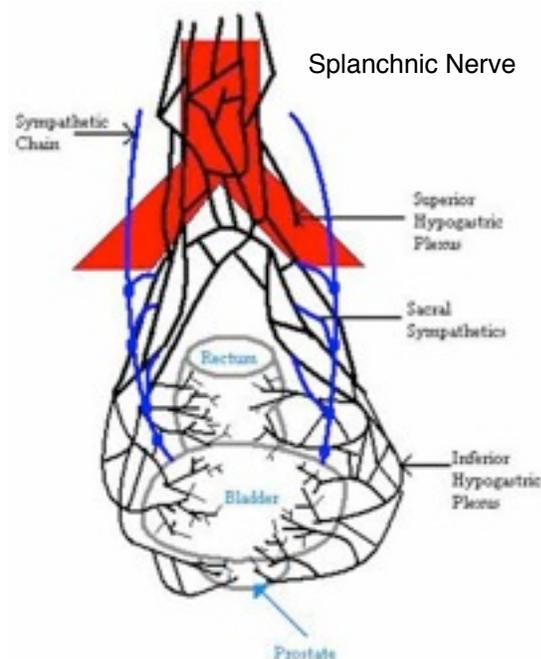
ॐ The 7 Dhatus – There are seven dhatu or tissues in the body known as sapta dhatu: blood, fat, flesh, bone, marrow, skin, semen/ova. To maintain these tissues, certain chemical hormones need to be produced, which the pancreas is involved in the production of. When these tissues are healthy disease has a harder time taking hold of our body.

In researching how pressing our heel into our perineum effects the pancreas I discovered one of the many nerves to the pancreas is the splanchnic nerve (a splanchnic nerve is a nerve, parasympathetic OR sympathetic, that brings innervation to viscera), this nerve has fibers from the rectum and bladder to the sacrum to the pancreas and regulates emptying the bladder and rectum, as well as sexual functions. In my research I would relate the shivani nadi to the splanchnic nerve. So Janu Sirsasana B stimulates the pancreas (through pressure on the splanchnic nerve) in regulating the bladder and rectum, and sexual functions -- another tie to Janu Sirsasana B is through the pressure from the heel on prostate in men which also will effect sexual functions.

Since the Splanchnic nerve is attached to the rectum, placing your heel closer to your rectum would seem to be more direct pressure on the specific nerve to regulate the endocrine function of the pancreas. Also there seems to be some varying opinions on how to place your foot and heel (“pointed” (plantar flexion) or flexed (dorsi flexion) . . . whichever position makes your heel press further up into your perineum would be the best foot/heel position for you.

Janu Sirsasana B is also useful for prostate health -- the pressure from the heel on the prostate during B position has benefit. Latest research shows that gentle massage of the prostate [by a urologist] may be beneficial by:

ॐ helping to drain painfully sequestered secretions in a chronically inflamed prostate gland or seminal vesicles;





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As a leading prostatitis researcher has stated, "prostate massage" may help by releasing the tension around nerve endings behind the prostate. This represents a form of "myofascial release".

<http://www.chronicprostatitis.com/massage.html>

Just for further verification, here is what wikipedia has to say about the splanchnic nerve:

Pelvic splanchnic nerves or nervi erigentes are [splanchnic nerves](#) that arise from sacral [spinal nerves S2, S3, S4](#) to provide [parasympathetic](#) innervation to the [hindgut](#).

Structure

The pelvic splanchnic nerves arise from the ventral rami of the S2–S4 and enter the sacral plexus. They travel to their side's corresponding [inferior hypogastric plexus](#), located bilaterally on the walls of the rectum.

From there, they contribute to the innervation of the [pelvic](#) and [genital](#) organs. The nerves regulate the emptying of the [urinary bladder](#) and the [rectum](#) as well as [sexual](#) functions like [erection](#).

They contain both [preganglionic](#) parasympathetic fibers as well as visceral afferent fibers.

The [parasympathetic nervous system](#) is referred to as the cranio–sacral outflow; the pelvic splanchnic nerves are the sacral component. They are in the same region as the [sacral splanchnic nerves](#), which arise from the [sympathetic trunk](#) and provide sympathetic efferent fibers.

The proximal 2/3 of the [transverse colon](#), and the rest of the proximal [gastrointestinal tract](#) is supplied its parasympathetic fibers by the [vagus nerve](#). In the distal 1/3 of the transverse colon, and through the sigmoid and rectum, the pelvic splanchnic nerves take over.