

**POSE OF THE MONTH**  
January 2007

**Marichyasana C** – The first seated twist in the Primary Series. 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 important 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:**

- ☯ From Downward dog hop through to Dandasana.
- ☯ Bend your right knee and bring the heel close to your buttock and wide, to the outside of your hip (the same placement as in Marichyasana A)
- ☯ 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 (spine vertical sitting up tall on your sitting bones) if your knee is flaring out (you most likely have tightness in your hips), wrap your arm around your leg, sit up tall, lift your tailbone and try to rotate your pubic bone toward the floor as you hug your body to your leg and twist to the right. Or if you do not need to hold onto your leg
- ☯ Inhaling lift your ribs, extending your spine, as you exhale twist to the right trying to clear your chest past your right thigh, place 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 leg into your arm, slide your underarm 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 or
- ☯ 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.
- ☯ 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
- ☯ 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 the breath will come easier.

- ☯ Exhaling turn your gaze to the front and take vinyasa or switch sides.
- ☯ 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 twisting represents a means of managing problems in our life, these asana give insight and inspire a systematic approach to untying the tangled knots of life!

