



## POSE OF THE MONTH

July 2006

**Triang Mukhaekapada Paschimattanasana** – One foot transversely facing back intense west stretch (Triang means transverse, Mukha means face, Eka means one, pada means leg or foot, paschima means west, Uttana means intense.)

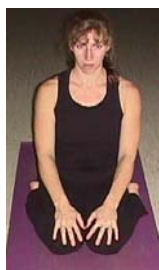
This is another forward bending posture –with one leg folded back alongside the thigh. This is NOT the “hurdler’s stretch” as that stretch is contraindicated in the field of sports medicine (except for hurdlers!) due to the strain it places on the inner ligaments (medial collateral) of the knee.

### Method

- ॐ From Downward facing dog, hop through with your right leg folded back, right foot alongside your right thigh, top of your foot on the floor, knees together. Pay attention to not let your foot roll out; all five toes should be in contact with the floor.
- ॐ Catch your left foot with both hands (even if you have to bend your knee), lift your head and chest up fully, take an inhale
- ॐ Exhale bend forward from the hip joint and place your chin or forehead on your knee or shin, paying attention to not round your upper back. If you are ‘listing’ or tilted to one side you may have to keep your elbow on the floor to help stabilize (or your hand), otherwise if you can, lift your elbows and gaze out toward your toes. Stay here for 5 deep breaths.
- ॐ Inhale lift your head, exhale ground your hands, inhale pick up yourself tucking your left leg under your right leg and take vinyasa or switch feet and repeat left.



**Some precautionary work may be necessary.** If you are very tilted in this posture



you may need to practice Virasana or knee sitting to get the ankles, knees, and/or thighs enough range of motion to do the full posture. Sitting on your heels with feet and knees together is the easiest position, progress by moving your feet apart (keep your knees together) and your sitting bones toward the floor. When you are able to sit with your sitting bones on the floor you will be comfortable in triang mukhaekapada paschimattanasana. To make virasana more comfortable you can roll your calf out as you tuck your thigh in—although some would call this movement a fidget that requires too much thinking! Keep in mind if you are practicing virasana in place of the full posture, you are working externally on the body, and you will not be receiving the benefits of Triang Mukhaekapada paschimattanasana, so be careful not to let yourself get “stuck” in virasana, but try the full posture regularly.

In general if you feel knee pain while in Virasana you should lift your hips up and either come forward onto your hands and knees or just lower your hips to the point of no pain. If you feel work or stretch in the ankles and tops of feet—you need this posture!

### Benefits

This pose cures a number of afflictions including body fat, water retention, swollen thighs, piles, and sciatica. It is reminded by Pattabhi Jois that these benefits come with consistent practice over a long period of time! In yoga terms this would be called *durga kala* (very long time) and *nairantarya* (without break).