

POSE OF THE MONTH
Supta Padangusthasana

Supta means sleeping or reclined, *Pada* means foot and *Angustha* means thumb, so reclining foot to thumb posture. This is the same posture we do standing, now we get to repeat it lying down where we take the balance challenge out of the posture and can work more on our hips and hamstrings, also we add the additional benefits of abdominal strengthening to the posture.

Method:

In both Yoga Mala and Lino Miele's book these asana are taught as two separate asanas with a vinyasa between them (first part being leg straight up, head to knee 5 breaths done on the right and then the left, take vinyasa, and the second part being leg to side for 5 breaths, first right, then left). However these asana have been combined to shorten the length of time required to do this practice!

- ☪ From Downward dog hop through and lie down in Samasthiti position.
- ☪ On inhale catch your right toe with the first two fingers of your right hand (aka the Ashtanga finger lock system). Extend your left leg along the floor and keep your lower back and left leg grounded. If possible extend your right leg while still holding the toe. If you are tight in your hamstrings you can bend your knee, if you are tight in both your hips and hamstrings you will be more comfortable if you hold your calf or thigh instead.
- ☪ Exhaling curl your chin up toward your knee or shin, sliding your left hand down your thigh as you curl up, gazing to the right toe. Hold this position for 5 deep breaths. If you are 'loosey goosey' make sure you are curling your torso up off the floor and not relying on your hamstring flexibility to touch your chin to your shin—and vice versa, if you are tight and strong make sure you are not avoiding the hamstring stretch by lifting up your torso too far to get your chin to shin.

Drishti: padhayoragrai (toes)



- ☪ Inhale, lower only your upper body to the floor still holding on to your toe (or leg)
- ☪ On Exhale turn your leg and head simultaneously in opposite directions—your leg goes out to the right as your gaze turns to the left. Keep your left hip grounded, how low your leg goes is governed by not losing the grounding of your left hip. Keep your left hand firmly on your thigh helping to stay grounded. Hold this position for 5 deep breaths. If you are holding your calf or thigh you can bend your knee and hold around the outside of your knee. No matter which grip you have you are working your leg both toward the floor and toward your ear.

Drishti: padhayoragrai/parsva (toes/side)

- ☪ **KEEPING YOUR BODY GROUNDED** on inhale bring both your leg and head to center
- ☪ Exhale curl your torso up off the floor trying to touch your chin to your shin (your hand slides down your thigh again)
- ☪ Inhale lower your body to the floor, exhale lower your leg to the floor.
- ☪ Repeat on your left side. Then take Chakrasana.



Benefits:

These poses help to cleanse the rectum, the urinary tract, the esophagus, and the veins. They also strengthen and firm the abdominals, keeping our body healthy, light and strong.

This series of stretching the hamstrings and hips also helps to reduce knee pain and strain. This posture has also been prescribed to help correct the length of the extremities in relation to the torso.