



POSE OF THE MONTH October 2006

Janu Sirsasana C – Head to knee pose, or head beyond the knee pose. Janu means knee, sirsa means head. Janu C is the final of the head to knee sequence in the Primary Series of Ashtanga Yoga. This pose can literally take 10 years to work into (it did me!), the twist of the knee joint at first seems like a threat to the knee but in actuality it is therapeutic for the knees and has been touted to cure chronic knee inflammation.

Method:

- ॐ From Downward dog, hop through to Dandasana.
- ॐ Inhaling lift your right leg, thread your right arm inside the right thigh and then underneath the calf, catch your toes with the palm of your right hand and gently pull them back
- ॐ Catch your heel with your left hand and carefully begin to rotate the heel upward as you bring the ball off your foot to the floor trying to match up the arch of your foot around your left inner thigh. Initially help your femur to externally rotate (inner thigh turns upward) as you place your foot in position. **If you suffer from knee pain you may need to remain in the 'holding position' holding your foot off the floor and gently encouraging rotation of the foot and leg.**
- ॐ If you can get the ball of your foot to the floor (again you can hold here for the pose) you want to work your foot toward a vertical position. This is most easily done by lifting your hips and scooting your hips forward closer to your foot.
- ॐ Swivel your right hip and knee forward moving your knee in closer to your left leg (ideally your right knee will come in to a 45° angle), at this point your right thigh should start internally rotate (right thigh moving down and in).
- ॐ If you are still able to continue with this pose, reach out and catch your left foot with both hands, inhale extend your spine and pull your lower abdomen in, exhaling forward bend over your left leg, while aiming your heel toward your navel. If you feel pressure on your pinky toe you can reach down and slide the toe toward the other toes to relieve pressure.
- ॐ Stay here for five deep breaths. Drishti is toward toes, unless your forehead is to your shin then gaze to your nose.
- ॐ Inhale come up for vinyasa and switch sides.



Benefits

During Janu Sirsasana C in females the heel presses into the uterus, this is therapeutic for the female reproductive system, just as the B position is therapeutic for the male reproductive system.

The entire 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). Also, the nerve to the liver is stimulated by this series of poses helping the liver to digest the food we eat and detoxify our blood. In addition the heel generates heat which adds a therapeutic effect. In Eastern traditions Janu Sirsasana is prescribed for those who consume too many caffeinated beverages or over-indulge in sexual activity (which zaps vital power).