

POSE OF THE MONTH  
September 2007

**Supta Konasana**—*Supta* means sleeping or reclined, *Kona* means angle. This is the first of the inverted poses. By inverting you are turning your body upside down, seeing your world from a whole new perspective ;) This posture is a nice introduction to inversions.

**Method:**

- ☪ From Downward dog hop through and lie down in Samasthiti position.
- ☪ Take your legs overhead, rolling up until your hips come over your shoulders and your feet to the floor. Reach your arms overhead and catch your big toes with the "Ashtanga finger lock system" (two fingers gripping the big toe, and big toe gripping the fingers) take your legs wide until your arms are extended straight, flex your feet and gently contract your quadriceps muscles to engage your thighs.
- ☪ Work to straighten the spine, lifting your sitting bones toward the ceiling and moving your spine toward the front of your body. Lifting your chin slightly, making sure your hips are over your shoulders and placing your body weight across the top of your shoulders will help you with getting more length in the spine and prevent you from resting on the 7<sup>th</sup> cervical vertebrae (the vertebrae that protrudes slightly at the base of your neck). Hold this position for five breaths gazing past the nose.



- ☪ **If you have tight hamstrings and/or lower back there are two options in this pose:**



1. bend your knees while still holding your toes, this will take the tension off your hamstrings and allow you to straighten your spine
2. instead of bringing your feet to the floor, slide back so you are legs distance away from the wall and place the soles of your feet flush on the wall at hip level, hold your ankles or shins, push into the wall with your feet to help lengthen your spine



- ☪ Inhaling, still holding onto your toes, roll up to balance on your sitting bones, extending your spine, head back; to roll up smoothly, grip with your toes, round your spine and use your inhale to begin the momentum, when upright lift your tailbone and extend your spine to stop the movement. Pause here on the balance completing your inhale (enjoy that split second of stillness before the exhale completes the pose)-
- ☪ Exhaling lower down to upavishta Konasana position (legs wide, chin to floor if possible) for one exhale. Keeping your heart and face lifted while holding on to your toes makes this landing smooth and light. To do this safely you need to either pull back on your toes to lift your heels so you can land on your calves, or if you have tight hamstrings bend your knees and let go of your feet to come down without clunking down on your calcaneus (heel bone). Hold this position for one full exhale.
- ☪ Inhale head up, exhale jump back for vinyasa.

**Benefits:**

These two asana are beneficial for all back problems, including sciatica. The rolling motion of the posture assists in correcting subluxations of the vertebrae.

In the previous postures the chin is on the floor stretching the front of the neck, in this series we reverse that position counter balancing the neck, these neck positions also benefit the esophagus by cleaning and toning it.

These asanas aid in the breakdown of body fat and strengthening both the abdominals and back muscles improving our connection to the bandhas—helping to keep the whole body light, healthy, and strong.