

POSE OF THE MONTH

September 2005¹

PARSVOTTANASANA

Sideways Stretching Pose

Parsvottanasana is the final of the six fundamental asana. The six fundamental asana begin the process of purification in the body. Firstly they make the body flexible, enhanced flexibility enables the cleansing process to work on a deeper level. They also introduce the bandhas to the practice of asana. The six fundamental postures are:

1. Padangusthasana (Hand to big toe posture)
2. Padahasthasana (Hand under foot posture)
3. Utthita Trikonasana (Triangle)
4. Utthita Parsvakonasana (Extended side angle)
5. Prasarita Padottanasana (Wide leg forward bending)
6. Parsvottanasana (Sideways stretching pose)

Method:

- Bring hands together behind your back in prayer position (anjali mudra)
- Inhaling take one big step open turning to the right squaring your hips to the back wall — right foot points straight ahead and swivel left toes out slightly
- Exhaling touch the nose or forehead to the knee (or move in that direction!) - with or without bending the knee. Stay for 5 deep breaths.
- Inhaling come up turning to the left
- Exhale fold over left leg moving nose toward knee. Hold 5 breaths.
- Inhale come up using core strength, stand up straight squaring off feet
- Exhale Samasthiti

This asana aids in reducing excess fat on the waist and legs and strengthens and tones the muscles of the legs. It helps to clear mucous blocking the respiratory tract if breathing is deep while in the forward bend.

In short the six fundamental asana loosen the limbs of the body which aids in movement. Done properly with proper breathing they can help eliminate aches and pains that occurs in the joints and help the body to become light and healthy.

