

Shav-Asana: A Miracle Pose

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Abstract

Sav-Asana is such a gift. The pose sets up the conditions that allow you to gradually enter a truly relaxed state, one that is deeply refreshing in itself and that also can serve as a starting point for meditation. Shav Asana allows ultimate relaxation of your body and mind, which is just as essential as exercise and a balanced diet are. After a strenuous workout that involves stretching, twisting, contracting, and inverting of muscles, Shav Asana allows your body to rest and regroup. Even the most neglected muscles will get some time to let go of their stress in such a short span of time. Yoga furnishes the nervous system with a whole lot of neuromuscular information. Shav Asana helps your nervous system integrate this information before your mind gets busy with the regular stress of the day. This pose resembles the posture of a dead body and is, therefore, named after it. This position seems quite easy, but it could also be one of the hardest since you need to completely relax your body and mind. This pose is usually practiced after an active yoga session. It instills deep healing and completely relaxes your body. You can also practice this pose whenever you are extremely tired and need to get back to work quickly. It is refreshing and rejuvenating.

Keywords: Shav meaning "Corpse", And Asana Meaning "Posture" or "Seat", Rejuvenate Meaning To Make Somebody/Something Feel or Look Younger, Furnish: Supply, Strenuous: Needing or Using Lot Of Effort Or Energy.

Introduction

If you work continuous that will unbalance the nervous system, resulting in affect everything else in the body. As human nervous system has two complementary "settings:" the sympathetic and parasympathetic.

One is the sympathetic nervous system that puts us in "fight or flight" mode. In that we're in high alert, ready to move, react and make changes. When sympathetic nervous system is activated, Breath and heart rate increases, blood pressure increases and the digestive system shuts down.

Second one is parasympathetic nervous system that is "rest and digest." It's a relaxed (easy) mode in which vital signs slow down and digestion powers up. In this condition body collects its energy and focuses on healing and recovery, cleaning itself and making itself stronger.

The body has an incredible ability to heal and recover itself, but if it's out of balance, if we never give it the chance to go into its healing mode, it can only put Band-Aid's on the problem.

Shav Asana might look like a nap at the end of your yoga practice. But that is certainly not, it's actually a fully conscious pose aimed at being awake, yet completely relaxed. In *Shav Asana*—also known as corpse pose— you lie down on your back and relax your body and mind step by step so that you may fully assimilate the benefits of your asana practice.

Whether it seems simple-sounding pose but is more difficult than you might realize. The mind can cause distractions that make it a challenge. Your body might feel cold, itchy, or unsettled. *Shav Asana* occurs at the end of the yoga practice to remedy this obstacle.

Aim of the study

Aim of the study is to reveal inherent benefits of shav-asana

Content

This asana which is completely effortless looks like a dead body so that it is named shavasana. This asana is one of the easiest asanas to take position but the most difficult to practice. It is one of the best relaxation poses for the whole body as well as mind and if practiced correctly and with full efforts, can relax every body part, relaxing not fully the body the mind.

About this asana it is very important that the asana looks very simple to practice but is actually highly difficult. To keep the body in a corpse like state is the external position and is not so important. The thing

what is important and lies in the success of this asana is keeping the mind focused on relaxing each body part completely. To be able to do this the body needs to be in a comfortable position. In each position of the body there is a kind of strain or pressure on every muscle, called muscle tone. The aim of this asana is to reduce this strain to its minimum and give the muscles the real rest and relaxation that they need. but the muscles cannot be relaxed immediately after taking the shav Asana position, therefore one has to relax each muscle with great deliberation. And in this one has to pacify and relax the mind, freeing it from thoughts, worries and ideas. One has to think of each and each body part (the amount of detail may depend upon the time available) and relax it removing the tension by changing the position or shaking and dropping it, from the crown of the head to the toes or toe to head. The mind and body are deeply connected. If the mind is occupied by thoughts and worries, then the shav Asana will not be successful. Therefore, one has to acquire the stability of the mind along with the stability of the body.

When the person first goes into the asana the motor neurons that innervate the skeletal muscles are still firing nerve impulses due to the activity performed before. As the breath becomes more regular and relaxed the nerve impulses slowly begin to drop. The rhythmic movement of the diaphragm muscle leads to deeper relaxation and eventually even the nerve impulses to the deep postural muscles of the torso are minimised.

After taking the position first attempt to free the mind from thoughts and worries and concentrate on the body. Then concentrate on each body part one by one relaxing it. After relaxing the whole body turn and focus the mind to the the breath. Do not allow the mind to control the breath but you have to observe it with your inner eyes. let it be slow and relaxed. The more the body relaxes, the slower the breath will become. In the final position, the whole body is completely relaxed, the breath is very slow and the mind is stable, calm and quiet.

How to Do Shav Asana (Corpse Pose)

1. First of all lie down on the floor, ensuring that there will be no disturbance for the duration of the pose. Make you in fully comfortable position, but don't use any pillows or cushions. It will be best if you lie on a hard surface.
2. Close your eyes and place your legs such that they are comfortably apart pointing toes facing sideward. Make sure your legs are at completely comfortable distance and position.
3. Keep your arms placed along your body and slightly apart, leaving your palms open and facing upwards.
4. Now, slowly start drawing attention to every area of your body, starting from your toes to head. As you do this, breathe slowly, yet deeply, setting your body in a state of deep relaxation. Take care that you do not fall asleep in the process.
5. During the asana breathe slowly, yet deeply. This will impart complete relaxation. Imagine as you breathe in, your body is getting energized, and as you breathe out, your body will calm down. Draw

your awareness on yourself and your body, forgetting all other tasks. Let go and surrender! But make sure you don't sleep.

6. When your body feels relaxed and refreshed, roll to one side(left side), keeping your eyes closed. Stay in the position for a minute, until you sit up slowly.
7. Take a few deep breaths and gain awareness of your surroundings before you open your eyes again.

Precautions during Shav Asana

This asana is absolutely safe and can be practiced by anyone and everyone. Unless in specific conditions as your doctor has advised you not to lie on your back, you can practice this asana.

If you are pregnant, it might be a good idea to rest your head and chest on a bolster for comfort.

Avoid going to sleep as this will prevent the decrease in nerve impulses as well as the deep relaxation.

Duration

As it is a relaxation pose there is no such duration. How much time you have to get relaxed you can do it. It should be practiced whenever the body becomes tired, before and after asanas it is necessary and also between asanas when required. It is especially necessary after dynamic asana series like Surya namaskar. It may also be practiced separately during the day, when needed, after a hard daywork.

Variations and tips

1. If required one can use some padding or support where necessary. The mat should not be soft as this will induce sleep. If the ground is slanted then let the head be lower, this prevents a drop in blood circulation and increases the flow to the brain and other vital organs. For those with lower back pain and light cushion can be placed under the lower back. Some may need a small cushion under their knees also.
2. You can stretch the body a little as when the muscles relax they also lengthen. If the body is relaxed without a little stretch then the body may feel cramped a bit after the practice.
3. If you are prone to low blood pressure then very slowly move from shav Asana by first turning to the left side and then sitting up. This will increase the blood flow through the heart and prevent dizziness.
4. If often you get asleep during asana, then keep the legs a little closer together. This will give a mild moola bandha which will prevent sleep or bring the upper extremities closer together which will give a small amount of tension. If this is not enough then focus on the breath, giving a simple inhale and exhale focus.
5. those who are not accustomed to relax the muscles and body many issues may arise, such as mental or psychological. To overcome this a wholistic yoga practice of asanas is needed, ideally with other yogic techniques.
6. If finding it consistently difficult to relax the body then try a sequence of tensing and then relaxing the muscles of different body parts or concerned area. the arms and shoulders, the legs,

pelvis, lower back and abdomen, the chest and upper back, facial muscles. By doing this the Golgi tendon receptors stimulate relaxation and muscles get relaxed.

Advanced Pose Alterations

1. If you experience tightness in your shoulders, chest, or back, your shoulders will not rest on the floor, and this will strain your neck. In this case, it is a good idea to slightly elevate your head and bring it to the same level as your neck. This will help soften the back of your neck. All you need to do is put a folded blanket under your head such that it ends at the top of your shoulders.
2. If the muscles of the lower back or hamstrings are tight, it might be a good idea to elevate your legs while you practice the corpse or savasana pose. This works well even when you have pain and discomfort in your lower back and hips. All you need to do is place a bolster right under your knees. If you don't have a bolster at hand, you could stack up blankets and place them under your knees.

Releasing the asana position

- 1 Prepare your mind for releasing the asana.
- 2 Slowly move the fingers and toes
- 3 Straighten the neck.
- 4 Bring the arms back next to the sides.
- 5 Close the legs together
- 6 Slowly turn left side and come to sitting position
- 7 Rub your palms, open and keep on your eyes and open the eyes.

Anatomical focus

It should be on each body part.

Awareness

Keep awareness on relaxing each body part, relaxed breathing.

Do's

1. Be calm, Keep the mind focused on relaxing. If thoughts come, do not stress about them but let them pass.
2. Keep the spine in a straight line
3. Leave body parts passive or still as even the slightest movement will use many muscles and increase the nerve impulses.
4. Keep the eyes closed.

Don'ts

1. Don't go to sleep.
2. Don't wear tight fitting clothing.

Health Benefits of Corpse Pose (Shavasana)

Health benefits of shav Asana is uncountable. Few of them given below-

1. Shavasana relaxes your whole body and mind completely.
2. Releases stress, fatigue, depression and tension.
3. Results in Improved concentration.
4. It cures insomnia.
5. It relaxes your muscles fully.
6. Calms the mind and helps improving mental health.
7. Excellent asana for stimulating blood circulation throughout the body equally.
8. Also it is Beneficial for those people who are suffering from neurological problem, asthma, constipation, diabetes, indigestion.

9. Shav Asana brings a deep, meditative state of rest, which may help in the repair of tissues and cells, and in releasing stress. It also gives time for the yoga workout to sink in at a deeper level.
10. This posture brings you in a state of rejuvenation. It is the perfect way to end a yoga session, or a hectic work.
11. It also helps in reducing blood pressure, anxiety, and insomnia.

This is an excellent way to ground the body and reduce the Vatadosha (imbalance of the air element) in the body.

Benefits of shavasana in detail

Energetic benefits

Prana in the body flows freely when there is relaxation. This is part of why we try to relax as much as possible in every asana and relax any muscles that aren't needed to hold the pose.

Shav Asana, where no muscles are needed to hold the pose, energy can move freely and expand throughout the entire body. All the energies that we were actively working with through the asana practice can deepen and harmonize.

This free flowing of prana, combined with relaxation and a holistic awareness of the entire body, creates a unique opportunity to go beyond the physical body. We can feel the limits of the body dissolving into a field of awareness.

In this expansion, shavasana also offers a precious chance to feel Spanda, the Sacred Tremor of the Heart.

Mental and emotional benefits

ShavAsana is a time to restore your energy and to integrate the results of the yoga practice, the time for any insights and changes to sink into the subconscious.

This process is necessary after practicing asanas if we want lasting transformation.

It does not depend on how much we understand intellectually, no matter how much we try to fix things at the conscious level, the only way to change our reality is by changing our mind at a much deeper level through shav Asana.

Besides this, all the benefits for the physical body also carry over to the mental and emotional levels. It is seen that a few minutes of shav Asana every day can help relieve anxiety and depression and create breathing space in a busy schedule.

It is to remember that the body stores memories and emotions in its physical structure, especially the fascia system. When we practice asanas, many tensions and locked energies are shaken loose. Shav asana allows them to be released completely. Just witness them and let them go!

With all above Shavasana can also improve your meditation, especially if you tend towards drowsiness. Generally we associate relaxation with sleeping. Then we try to relax in meditation, and of course, the habit kicks in and we start sleeping.

In shavasana, we learn to relax while staying fully aware, even while lying down. This helps go into deeper states while maintaining high clarity.

Spiritual Insights

Shavasana has several profound meanings and associations within the yogic tradition.

Shiva and Shakti

There is a Sanskrit saying that Shiva without Shakti is shava (a corpse).

In Hindu iconography, it's common to see forms of the Goddess standing or dancing on the prone body of Shiva.

Shiva, the masculine principle, represents pure consciousness. It is the Void that, paradoxically, is the basis for all reality. The space in which the dance of life takes place.

Shakti, the feminine principle, is universal energy, the sacred energy that points back to its source (Shiva).

Many spiritual traditions throughout history have only been interested in the transcendent, not the immanent aspect of divinity. The world of manifestation is dismissed as maya, illusion, impure, sinful or irredeemably broken.

This long tangent brings us to the point that shavasana is meant to put the practitioner in touch with that transcendent principle.

It is an asana that encourages us to go beyond everything changing and relative. It reveals the most profound stillness, the dissolution of all forms into the Void.

Concept of Death

As the "corpse pose," shavasana naturally brings the practitioner to a contemplation of death.

Although it might seem grim at first, meditating on death is actually one of the most uplifting and motivating spiritual practices, because it reminds us of what's important in life – and of just how precious this human life is.

It's only once one has "died" and after that we can awaken to life as it really is. Beyond the parts of us that can change and die, what we really are is always alive and is the source of all life.

In a way, the whole spiritual practice can also be seen as a process of dying: the death of the ego.

Psychologically In This process one can feel like dying because it demands that we let go of everything that we are identified with, everything that we considered to be ourselves.

This feeling doesn't come only before some grand realization. It can happen in a small way in any meditation, during a retreat or at any point when we're about to move on to a new stage of our spiritual growth.

If you look closely enough, death is actually an aspect of every moment of experience. Nothing lasts forever, but actually, nothing lasts more than a moment. Everything is in constant flux. The cells in your body are decaying and reforming, particles are moving, time is passing.

The universe is constantly in a state of dissolving and reforming. The old forms are gone as soon as they appear.

This fact of subtle impermanence, as it's known in Buddhism, shows that death is simply a part of life. It is a blessing. It allows for change, for evolution, and for all of life to take place.

Feeling of Surrender

Shavasana is an invitation to experience one of the most important elements of spiritual practice, if not the most important: surrender.

In shav Asana, no effort can or should be made. (Besides the effort to stay awake and relaxed) except surrendering physically and mentally there's no way we can push to do it any better. We can only be still and open to receive grace.

However, it's significant that this asana comes only at the end of a yoga practice or hectic work schedule, where we do a lot of efforts. In shav Asana being effortless to restore the energy.

It's like shooting an arrow from a bow. You draw back the arrow, concentrate on the target, build up powerful tension in the string, and then release. The arrow flies. If you don't build up the tension, or if you don't let go at the end, the arrow will never make it to the target.

We can truly get in touch with the deepest of Anahata Chakra through Shav-asana. In this asana, as we release the whole of the body into the ground and allow the full effect of gravity to flow through us then we restrain and retain Vayu Tattva

This asana stimulates the *mooladhara* (root) chakra, because the entire length of the body is connected with the earth. Energizing this chakra through savasana is believed to ground the individual, providing the inner stability necessary for personal growth.

1. Increase in energy and productivity
2. Decrease in anxiety and panic attacks
3. Improved memory, focus and concentration
4. Increased confidence

Benefits for Women

1. The benefits of shav Asana cover the whole body but there are also some benefits especially for women.
2. Shav Asana can be very useful during menstruation as it gives a deep relaxation to the muscles and also to the mind. If a woman is feeling tearful, angry, irritable, tired or just plain stressed that are very common symptoms during menstruation Shav Asana will help. It will give the peace and calm needed by relaxing the muscles, focusing the mind and getting rid of all anxieties or worries. Shav Asana can also help if there is any lower back or pelvic pain as proper blood circulation takes place during shav Asana position. By focusing on the stressed part the woman can relax the area and relieve the pain.
3. During pregnancy it is a great practice to do at any time of the day, especially if she is feeling tired or emotional.
4. In women Irregularities in the menstrual cycle are often indicative of a larger problem. Shav Asana helps to rebalance the body and relaxes each body system.
5. It is beneficial for emotional disturbances, stress, anger, depression and frustration, redirecting the energy and giving a feeling of calmness and freshness.

Therapeutic Applications

1. All stress related diseases

2. Fatigue
3. High blood pressure
4. Heart complaints
5. Stress
6. Anxiety
7. Insomnia

What The Yogic Scriptures Say on Shavasana

“Lying upon one’s back on the ground at full length like a corpse is called Shavasana. This removes the fatigue caused by the other asanas and induces calmness of mind.” Verse 32, Chapter 1, Hatha Yoga Pradipika.

“Lying flat on the ground (on ones back) like a corpse is called mrtasana. This posture destroys fatigue, and quiets the agitation of the mind.” Verse 11, Chapter 2, Gheranda Samhita.

Conclusion

“Shav Asana is the great posture in terms of balancing our nervous system: while much of asana practice is designed to regulate the body, stimulate, and even provide healthy stress, Shav-Asana is the down-regulator. It shifts from the sympathetic nervous system to the parasympathetic side, and we experience a calming, sweet release. Over time, Shav Asana teaches us howand that we canmove from any anxiety and hyper-stimulation to this state of down-regulation where digestive system, the immune system, and other essential systems are restored and enhanced.

Shav-Asana is a miracle pose which creates the opportunity to find peace and with the fact of our mortality. As our breath slows and becomes more shallow, we come to be conscious (as we are ready) that there will be a last breath. Practicing Shav-Asana is a rehearsal for that last breath, that last moment,

not in a morbid way, but rather heightening our awareness of our current state of aliveness, and inviting us to live fully.”

Shavasana imparts deep awareness of your mind and body. You become extremely aware of each breath you take. Therefore, it is a great introduction to deep meditation for those who are interested in it. Yoga is a ritual. It is meant to start with a warm up, followed by the practice itself, and end with a sort of integration phase for the effects of the exercise to seep into the mind and body. Shavasana helps achieve that. It is a perfect end to a satisfying workout.

The essence of Savasana is to relax with attention, that is, to remain conscious and alert while still being at ease. Remaining aware while relaxing can help you begin to notice and release long-held tensions in your body and mind.

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