



Surya Namaskar: Its Techniques and Health Benefits

Anurag Sachan* and Geeta

Assistant Prof., Department of Physical Education, Chaudhary Bansi Lal University, Bhiwani, Haryana, India.

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*Address for Correspondence

Anurag Sachan

Assistant Prof.,
Department of Physical Education,
Chaudhary Bansi Lal University,
Bhiwani, Haryana, India.
E.Mail: as3323@gmail.com



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ABSTRACT

Surya Namaskara also known in English as Sun Salutation (lit. "salute to the sun"), is a common sequence of Hatha yoga asanas. This sequence of movements and asanas can be practiced on varying levels of awareness, ranging from that of physical exercise in various styles, to a complete sadhana which incorporates asana, pranayama, mantra and chakra meditation. It is often the beginning vinyasa within a longer yoga series. Sūrya Namaskāra may also refer to other styles of "Salutations to the Sun". There are twelve poses in the Surya Namaskar series, and a full round consists of performing two sets of this series. During the second set, practitioners move the opposite leg from the one involved in movement during the first set. Whether you regularly practice yoga or not, you can enjoy the health benefits of Surya Namaskar. Performed correctly, it is a completely safe set of yoga poses that will not cause strain or injury.

Keywords: Surya Namaskar, Yoga, Health Benefits.

INTRODUCTION

It is said that the King of Aundh was the first one to introduce sun salutations. He stated that this sequence must be maintained on a regular basis and without fail under his reign in the Maharashtra region of India. Whether this story is true or not, the beginning of this tradition has its origins in that region, and the most popular form of exercise to begin each day is Surya Namaskar. Nowadays, many schools in India practice and teach yoga to all their students and start their days with the beautiful and poetic collection of exercises known as sun salutations. The literal translation of the word "Surya Namaskar" is *salutations to the Sun*. However, if one looks carefully into its etymological meaning, it has a deeper meaning. The word "Namaskar" means "I bow my head with complete gratitude and offer myself to you wholeheartedly without being biased and partial". The word "Surya" means "the





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one who expands and illuminates the world". You will experience health benefits by practicing the Sun Salutation just once daily, but you can also practice the series of poses as often as you like morning, noon or night. Surya Namaskar provides all of the key health benefits of yoga in a very succinct package. In addition to these physical benefits, Surya namaskar practice stimulates and conditions virtually every system in the body. Over time, Surya Namaskar will help you achieve a sense of well-being and purpose. It is a spiritually uplifting exercise and promotes a keen awareness of the interconnectedness of your body mind and breath. Muscle tone and Improve flexibility. All the asanas carried out in Surya Namaskar focus on different muscle groups and nerve centers called Chakras. This helps you tone almost all your body parts including arms, abs, thighs, and butt. It also gives you more flexibility and improves your body posture.

Great cardio training and hormonal balance

Surya Namaskar gives your body a quick and nice workout. If done in a fast manner, it acts as a cardio workout for your abs, thighs, and butt. Improved blood circulation results in low cholesterol levels and improved heart health. Another benefit of proper blood circulation is a good hormonal balance. Keep in mind that blood is the carrier of our hormones, so, if it is working properly, they'll reach all your organs without a problem.

Improves digestion and promotes weight loss

Proper exercise and proper rest along with a balanced diet result in improved insulin sensitivity. Sun salutations stimulate the digestive tract by producing the right kind of digestive juices. Thus, you improve your metabolism, which helps you get rid of all toxins and burn all the extra calories.

Increases energy and awareness levels

Along with asanas, the breathing pattern is also an important aspect of Surya Namaskar. This gives deep conscious relaxation to the body and mind. It helps to relax the mind and sharpen the senses. It increases your self-awareness, which increases your energy levels.

Enables Better Absorption of Nutrients

Proper blood circulation and digestion enables better absorption of nutrients, which in turn improves your overall health. Nutrient absorption helps to carry out vital functions in the body. In today's world, unhealthy lifestyles have led to many disorders like thyroid dysfunction, PCOD, PCOS, obesity, etc. Surya Namaskar can be part of a healthy routine which is proven to keep such diseases at bay.

Reduces moods swings and brings more emotional stability

Deep breathing techniques with specific asanas provide great relaxation to the nerve cells or chakras. It can positively impact brain functioning. Specifically, it helps you balance between the right and left sides of the brain. This brings you more emotional stability and increases your creativity and mental capacity.

Improves Your Skin's Glow

A nice-glowing skin is a result of good blood circulation, good digestion, relaxation and good sleep. You get all of this with sun salutations!

Benefits of Surya Namaskar

When practiced in the morning, Surya Namaskar relieves stiffness, energizes the body and refreshes the mind. During the day, it is a rejuvenating alternative to caffeine, and at night, Surya Namaskar can help you relax and get a good night's sleep. SuryaNamaskar provides all of the key health benefits of yoga in a very succinct package. It is a holistic exercise that provides physical health benefits, but also mental or emotional as well as spiritual benefits. The obvious advantage of Surya Namaskar is the workout it provides for the muscles, but it also benefits joints, ligaments and the skeletal system by improving posture, flexibility and balance. In addition to these physical benefits, suryanamaskar practice stimulates and conditions virtually every system in the body. It is good for the heart and





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stimulates the cardiovascular system. It oxygenates the blood and helps strengthen the heart. Surya Namaskar is good for the digestive system and the nervous system. It stimulates the lymphatic system and supports respiratory system health, as well. Practicing Surya Namaskar also benefits the Endocrine system and enables the various endocrinal glands to function properly. These include the thyroid, parathyroid and pituitary glands as well as the adrenal gland, testes and ovaries. Like most forms of exercise, Surya Namaskar provides mental benefits to regular practitioners. You will feel wonderful after performing the Sun Salutation. It is relaxing and rejuvenating, and tension, stress and anxiety melt away as you perform Surya Namaskar. Surya Namaskar is an excellent alternative to caffeine and other stimulants. If you suffer from insomnia or sleep disturbances, you will find practicing Surya Namaskar aids in helping you fall asleep without the need for depressants. With regular practice, Surya Namaskar is an excellent way to manage stress and alleviate depression. You will expend a tremendous amount of energy as you move through the two sets of poses. Surya Namaskar teaches you to concentrate, and learning to achieve the poses is incredibly gratifying.

Benefits of Poses

Each of the Surya Namaskar, poses in the series provides specific health benefits:

- Pose 1 (and 12): Promotes balance, stimulates the respiratory system, exercises shoulder, back and neck muscles
- Pose 2 (and 11): Promotes balance, promotes digestion, exercises arms and shoulder muscles, tones the spine, promotes flexibility in back and hips
- Pose 3 (and 10): Promotes blood circulation, tones abdominal tracts, stretches back and leg muscles, stimulates spinal nerves, stimulates lymphatic system
- Pose 4 (and 9): Exercises spine, strengthens hand and wrist muscles
- Pose 5 (and 8): Stimulates blood circulation, strengthens the heart, strengthens wrist and arm muscles, relieves neck and shoulder tension
- Pose 6: Strengthens leg and arm muscles, increases flexibility in neck and shoulders, stretches arms, shoulder, neck and back muscles, exercises back muscles, releases tension in neck and shoulder
- Pose 7: Stimulates circulation to abdominal organs, tones digestive tract, stretches upper and lower body, promotes flexibility in the back, stimulates nerves in spine
- Poses 8 through 12 are essentially repetitions of poses 5 through 1, respectively. The health benefits of each are similar to their corresponding poses.

The 12 mantras for Surya Namaskar

12 mantras for Surya Namaskar are the auspicious mantras (chants). One should recite one mantra after completing one round of Surya Namaskar. Some people prefer to recite Gayantri Mantra after doing sun salutations. Following are the 12 mantras to recite while performing sun salutation.

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|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Aummitrayanamah | 2. Aumravayenamah | 3. Aumsuryayanamah, | 4. Aumbhanavenamah |
| 5. Aumkhagayanamah | 6. Aumpushnenamah, | 7. Aumhiranyagarbhayanamah | 8. Aummarichayenamah |
| 9. Aumadityayanamah, | 10. Aumsavitrenamah | 11. Aumarkayanamah | 12. Aumbhaskarayanamah |

CONCLUSION

Sūrya Namaskāra may also refer to other styles of "Salutations to the Sun". Surya Namaskar is an exercise in itself, but it is also sometimes used as a warm up for other, more strenuous workouts. Regular practice of *Surya Namaskar* is the way towards good health. Surya Namaskar provides all of the key health benefits of yoga in a very succinct package. It is a holistic exercise that provides physical health benefits, but also mental or emotional as well as spiritual benefits. The obvious advantage of Surya Namaskar is the workout it provides for the muscles, but it also benefits joints, ligaments and the skeletal system by improving posture, flexibility and balance. In addition to these





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physical benefits,. Surya namaskar practice stimulates and conditions virtually every system in the body. Over time, Surya Namaskar will help you achieve a sense of well-being and purpose. It is a spiritually uplifting exercise and promotes a keen awareness of the interconnectedness of your body, mind and breath.

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