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REVIEW ARTICLE

THE THERAPEUTIC SIGNIFICANCE OF PAWANMUKTASANA (WIND-RELIEVING POSE): A YOGIC TOOL FOR DIGESTIVE AND MUSCULOSKELETAL HARMONY

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Abstract

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Pawanmuktasana, commonly known as the Wind-Relieving Pose, is a foundational yogic posture with numerous health benefits, particularly in enhancing digestion and relieving gastrointestinal discomfort. This asana is also a key component of preparatory yogic practices aimed at loosening joints, strengthening abdominal muscles, and promoting pranic flow. Through gentle pressure on the abdomen, it assists in the removal of trapped gases, tones the digestive system, and relieves lower back stiffness. This article explores the scientific basis, technique, and therapeutic utility of Pawanmuktasana, along with its role in preventive and curative aspects of health. The practice is also discussed in the context of Ayurveda and Yogic lifestyle for maintaining digestive and musculoskeletal balance.

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is a holistic science that integrates the body, mind, and spirit, offering practices that are both preventive and curative. Among the various asanas, Pawanmuktasana holds a special place for its simplicity and therapeutic effectiveness. Derived from Sanskrit words: Pawan (air

or wind), Mukta (release), and Asana (pose), the term signifies a posture that aids in releasing trapped air or gas from the digestive system.

Primarily practiced in the supine position, it is suitable for all age groups and is especially beneficial for people suffering from bloating, constipation,

arthritis, and sedentary lifestyle disorders. It is often included in the Pawanmuktasana series, a group of movements formulated by Swami Satyananda Saraswati to loosen the joints and enhance pranic flow. This article investigates its anatomical effects, its relation to doshic balance in Ayurveda, and its role in lifestyle management.

Discussion

1. Technique of Pawanmuktasana

Starting position: Lie flat on the back in Shavasana.

Step-by-step:

- Inhale deeply.
- As you exhale, raise one or both knees towards the chest.
- Clasp the hands around the knees or shin.
- Lift the head towards the knees if comfortable.
- Breathe normally and hold the posture for 15–30 seconds.
- Return to the starting position while exhaling.

2. Physiological Benefits

- **Digestive Health:** Stimulates peristalsis, aiding bowel movements. Relieves bloating, flatulence, and indigestion. Massages internal organs like liver, pancreas, intestines, and stomach.
- **Musculoskeletal Support:** Strengthens abdominal muscles. Relieves tension in the lower back

and hip joints. Improves flexibility of the lumbar spine and sacroiliac joints.

➤ **Circulatory and Respiratory**

Benefits: Encourages venous return from the lower limbs. Improves lung capacity by freeing thoracic pressure.

3. Ayurvedic Perspective

- In Ayurveda, Vata dosha governs movement and is seated in the colon.
- Pawanmuktasana helps regulate Apana Vata, responsible for elimination and downward flow.
- Regular practice pacifies Vata imbalances, aiding in disorders like constipation, IBS, and lower back pain.
- It also kindles Agni (digestive fire) and reduces Ama (toxins).

4. Indications

- Constipation
- Flatulence
- Lower back stiffness
- Menstrual cramps
- Osteoarthritis (early stage)
- Sedentary fatigue

5. Contraindications

- Pregnancy (especially second and third trimester)
- Hernia
- Recent abdominal surgery
- Severe spinal disorders

- Hyperacidity (if aggravated by forward bend)

CONCLUSION

Pawanmuktasana, though seemingly simple, offers deep therapeutic effects when practiced regularly and mindfully. It not only alleviates physical discomfort related to digestion and musculoskeletal tightness but also aligns the energetic systems according to yogic and Ayurvedic principles. When integrated into daily routine along with proper diet and breath awareness, it becomes a powerful tool for preventive health. For students of yoga and Ayurveda alike, it presents an ideal starting point for deeper practice.

Summary

Pawanmuktasana, or the Wind-Relieving Pose, is a gentle but effective yogic posture that supports digestion, strengthens the lower back, and calms Vata dosha. Through abdominal compression, it stimulates internal organs and helps in the expulsion of gas,

promoting detoxification and digestive ease. Suitable for daily practice, it is beneficial for people of all ages, especially those with sedentary habits or digestive imbalances. This asana represents the yogic philosophy of self-healing and preventive wellness when aligned with Ayurvedic wisdom.

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