

Practical 16

Sukshma Vyayama (Leg Joints)



Note

Sukshma vyayama (SV) means Subtle Exercises. This is also called yogic warm-up. It is a series of practices. These practices are for joints (synovial joints) of our body. It improves flexibility and prepares our body for intermediate group of asanas or classic asanas.

Aim

To perform the series of Leg Joints.

After completion of this practical, you will be able to perform and demonstrate the series of practice of Leg Joints in appropriate format.

Requirements

- Yoga mat–1
- Cylindrical cushion (1-2 ft length and thickness 10-15 cm)– 1

Preparation of Yoga classroom

- The room should be clean and well ventilated

Preparation of practitioner

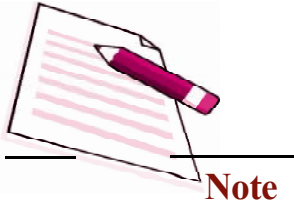
- Wear comfortable loose, light cotton clothes (Not too tight)
- Remove accessories like spectacles, wrist watches, belt etc before practice

Procedure

All the practices of S V are performed while sitting on the floor in the initial position (*prarambhik sthiti*) as given below

- Sit with the legs outstretched in front and palms on the floor beside the hip, fingers pointing backwards.
- Maintain head, neck and back in a straight line, and take support of the arms
- Close the eyes and relax the whole body





S V practice for leg joints are 9 in number. They are performed as follows:

Practice 1: Toe bending

Method

- Sit comfortably in initial position with feet slightly apart, be aware of the toes.
- Move the toes of both feet slowly backward and forward but ankles should be relaxed and motionless
- Hold each position for few seconds and repeat it 10 times
- Inhale as the toes move backward and exhale as the toes move forward.



Fig. 16.1: Toe bending

Practice 2: Ankle Bending

Method

- Stay in the initial position.



Fig. 16.2: Ankle bending



- Slowly move both feet backward and forward, bend them from ankle joints
- Hold the position for few seconds. Repeat it ten times
- Inhale as you bend the ankle backwards, exhale as feet move forward.

Practice 3: Ankle rotation

Method

- In the initial position only, legs little apart and keep them straight.
- Rotate both the feet from ankle clockwise and anticlockwise, ten times each. Inhale on upward movement and exhale on backward movement.
- Awareness – keep the heels on the ground throughout the practice. Avoid movement of knees during practice, if required hold them.

Practice 4: Knee bending

Method

- In initial position bend the right knee and clasp the hands under the right thigh. Straighten the right leg and bend at the knee so that the thighs come close to the chest, this is one round, repeat it ten times.
- Do the same thing with the left leg. Inhale while straightening the leg and exhale while bending the leg.
- Do not allow the heel or toes to touch the floor. Keep the head and spine straight.

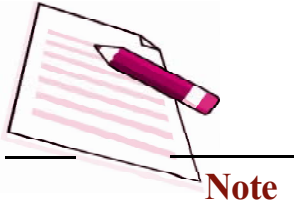


Note



Fig. 16.3: Knee bending





Note

Practice 5: Knee crank

Method

- Sit in the initial position only and bend the right knee as described in the last practice.
- Place the hands under the right thigh and interlock the fingers or cross the arms holding the elbows. Raise the right foot from the ground.
- Rotate the lower leg from the knee in a large circular movement, try to straighten the leg at the top of the upward movement.
- Rotate 10 times clockwise and anti clockwise.
- Repeat with the left leg.
- Inhale on the upward movements and exhale on the downward movement.
- The upper leg and trunk should be completely still.



Fig. 16.4: Knee crank

Practice 6: Kneecap Contraction

Method

- Stay in initial position only, contract the muscle surrounding the knees and drawing the kneecap back towards the thigh.
- Hold the contraction for few seconds. Release the contraction and let the kneecap return to its normal position.
- Practice it for 5 to 10 times.



- Inhale while contracting and hold the breath during contraction and exhale while relaxing the knee muscle.
- For better impact place fist or rolled cushion under the kneecap.
- All the knee asana strengthens the quadriceps muscle and the ligaments around the knee joint. These asana rejuvenate the joint by activating the healing energies.
- This is the best practice for knee problem.



Note

Practice 7: Ardha-Titliasana (Half butterfly)

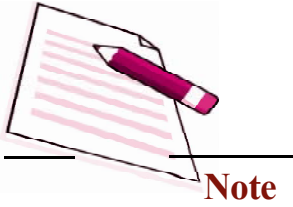
Method

- Stay in initial position only, bend the right leg and place the right foot on the left thigh as possible.



Fig. 16.5: Ardha-Titliasana





- Place the right hand on top of the bent right knee, hold the toes of the right foot with the left hand. This is the starting position.
- Gently move the right knee up towards the chest and gently push the knee down and try to touch the knee to the floor.
- Practice this up and down movements ten times. Inhale while bringing the knee towards the chest and exhale while moving it away from the chest.
- Do not force this moment in any way. Repeat same process with the other leg.
- One can practice it without breath synchronization also.
- This is an excellent practice for loosening of knee and hip joints and for meditative pose.

Practice 8: Hip Rotation

Method

- Sit in the same starting position as for the last asana with the right leg on the left thigh. Using the right arm, rotate the right knee in a circle. Try to make the circular movement as large as possible by the right knee.
- Practice ten rotations clockwise and ten rotations anticlockwise.
- Straighten the legs slowly and release the knee.
- Inhale during upward movement and exhale during downward movement.
- Repeat same process with the left leg.



Fig. 16.6: Hip Rotation



Practice 9: Full butterfly

Method

- Sit with the legs outstretched.
- Bend the knees and bring the soles of the feet together.
- Keeping the heels as close to the body as possible.
- Clasp the feet with both hands and fully relax the inner thigh muscle, this is the starting position.
- Gently bounce the knees up and down using the elbows as levers to press the legs down.
- Try to touch the knees to the ground on the downward stroke.
- Practice 30 to 40 up and down movements. One should not use any force or jerk.
- Breathing – Normal breathing throughout the practice.
- Awareness – Mental counting, movements, stretching of inner thighs, sensation of hip joints.
- **Contraindication** – People with sciatica and acute condition of back pain should avoid this asana.
- **Benefits** – It prepares legs for meditative asanas and other advance asanas. Tension of inner thighs muscles is relieved by practice of this asana. It also relieves stiffness of prolonged sitting and tiredness from long hours standing and walking.

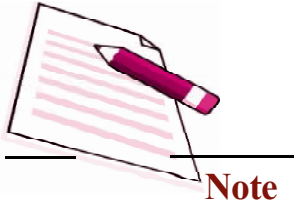


Note



Fig. 16.7: Full butterfly





Effects and observations

- Perform all leg joint practices as mentioned above daily for 8 days and record the effects

Physical effects	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
Difficulty in stretching								
Stiffness								
Sensation of warmth								
Muscular knots								
Cracking sounds								
Relaxation								

- ✓ or × under physical effect and submit the record.

Observation

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Remarks

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(Signature of the Instructor)

