YOGA

Sukshma Vyayama : Simple Yoga for Relaxation

"Yoga is not just physical exercises. It is emotional integration and spiritual elevation, with a touch of the mystic element. It gives you a glimpse of something which is beyond all imagination." Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Sukshma Yoga (subtle yoga) has simple and effective exercises for speedy relaxation.

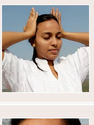
Are there days when you want to pull your hair out, grind your teeth, and tighten your fists? Well, tighten your fists some more! In fact, tighten your whole body. Breathe out, squeeze your stomach in, frown and purse your lips together. And now, let go with a 'haa' sound. Relaxing, isn't it?

The above is one of many **Sukshma Yoga techniques**. The **differentiating factor is that they are simple and quick. They can be done anywhere, anytime**. And you can also do them on days when you don't feel like pulling your hair out!

"This is **one of the fastest ways to relax** ," says Pallavi Joshi, a regular practitioner of Sukshma Yoga. While another Sukshma Yoga enthusiast adds, "You can do it anytime and anywhere. At home, at your workstation, while traveling in a car or bus. There is even such a thing as **airplane yoga**."

Sukshma Yoga takes no time or preparation. These little exercises **open up subtle energy channels** and in a session as short as 7 minutes, you can feel palpable difference.

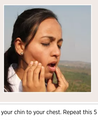
Relax with Sukshma Yoga



- When something goes wrong, we place our hands on our head and say 'Oh God!' Do the same thing now, but mindfully and calmly! Then gently massage your head and scalp. It **facilitates blood circulation to the brain**. This relaxes the mind and when the mind is relaxed, life becomes smoother.

- Pinch your eyebrows 5 to 6 times using your thumb and index finger.
  Did you know that we use forty three muscles to frown and only seventeen to smile?
- <<Roll your eyes 5 to 6 times clockwise and then anticlockwise.
- Squeeze your eyes tight and then open them wide. Repeat this 10 to 15 times.

- Pull your earlobes downwards and hold for 10 to 15 seconds.
  Sometimes parents or teachers pull children's ears. Did you know that there is a scientific reason behind this? Scientists say that all the nerves that increase pragya (awareness) are located in the lower part of the ear. Pulling your ears increases awareness and reduces the chances of making mistakes. So if you pull your own ears, no one will find an opportunity to do it to you!
- Hold your ears and move them in a clockwise and then anticlockwise direction (mimic the same motion that occurs when riding a bicycle) till your ears become hot.
- Move three fingers (first, middle, and ring finger) from the jawline to the chin and massage your cheeks. You may keep your mouth open as you do this.
  Did you find knots in the spaces between your jaws? This is where stress hides. See how 'knotty' you have been? Iron out all the knots with this technique!
- Open and close your jaws 8 to 10 times.
- Open your mouth and move your jaws from side to side 8 to 10 times.
- Rotate your neck. Breathing in, take your head back and breathing out, touch your chin to your chest. Repeat this 5 to 6 times.



- Rotate your head, first in a clockwise direction, then in an anticlockwise direction. Breathe in as you go up (first half of the cycle) and breathe out as you return to the starting position (second half of the cycle). Repeat this 5 to 6 times in a clockwise direction. Then switch to an anticlockwise direction.
- Now shake your hands vigorously for 2 minutes. If you are wondering how intensely you need to shake them, watch how dogs and cats shake water off their bodies. So shake, shake, shake your hands. Then slowly bring them to a halt and sit still.

As you practice these techniques, you begin to understand what kind of impact each stretch has on your mind. Each little movement or activity releases some amount of stress and you can slowly start comprehending the mechanism of *prana* (energy) movement within yourself.

Relaxation Techniques:

While Sukshma Yoga is a great way to relax the face and head, there are some other simple yoga asanas that Induce whole body relaxation.

Relax with Yoga Asanas

A yoga asana is a balance of effort and ease. We make the effort to get into the posture and then we relax. **Shishuasana (Child Pose)** and **Natarajasana (Dancing Shiva Pose)** ***are excellent relaxation techniques to release stress.***

So is **Yoga Nidra**, which is also an ideal way to round off any yoga routine. **Yoga Nidra has a direct impact on the nervous system, calming and rejuvenating it.**

Relax with Pranayama

Pranayama or yogic breathing is aimed at increasing the *prana* or the vital life force in the body. **Bhramari Pranayama (Humming Bee Breathing) is a powerful pranayama that acts as an instant antidote to stress**.

Relax with Meditation

Meditation and relaxation are closely associated**.** Meditation is the art of letting go. When all activity stops, meditation happens. The **rest in meditation is deeper than the deepest sleep! Meditate twice a day for twenty minutes** and see the difference in yourself!

So go ahead and practice the above yoga relaxation techniques. They will banish stress, revive your energy levels and rekindle your spirit.

Happy Practicing!

Yoga helps develop the body and mind, bringing a lot of health benefits. Even so, it is not a substitute for medicine. It is important to learn and practice yoga postures under the supervision of a trained yoga teacher. In case of any medical condition, practice yoga postures after consulting a doctor, and a Sri Sri Yoga teacher.

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