

YOGA

MAGAZINE

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**I AM LIVING AN ABUNDANT
& BEAUTIFUL LIFE**

**ANA FORREST &
JOSE CALARCO**

NEIL SELIGMAN
**CONSCIOUS
LEADERSHIP**

SIMON MUELLER
**DECISION-
MAKING &
MINDFULNESS**

SALLY GRIFFYN
**Creating a
Prosperous Yoga
Super-Niche
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AYUU KHEMA**

NANCY GERSTEIN
**MOTIVATIONAL
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Yoga and Ayurveda

FOR SKIN CARE

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The practice of yoga asana detoxifies the body and eliminates disease. Yoga is also practiced for spiritual attainment and longevity. Yoga asanas improve blood circulation, thereby improving complexion. Dynamic styles of yoga practice, such as ashtanga yoga, power and vinyasa yoga as well as yoga that is practiced in a heated room, facilitates perspiration, which hydrates and eliminates impurities from the skin. Yoga practice also reduces stress, thereby reducing tension in the muscles in the face, which can help to reduce the formation of stress lines in the face.

Ayurveda is translated as the knowledge of life. It is documented to be over 5000-years old and originates from the Indian subcontinent. Ayurveda is a system of medicine, which emphasizes the elimination of disease, the prevention of disease and well as lengthening the lifespan.

Yoga practice purifies consciousness and reduces emotions that cause tension in the body and face.

According to ayurveda, there is agni or digestive fire in the skin. The skin is able to absorb and metabolize oils, herbs and water. To ensure the health

and nourishment of the skin it is recommended to apply oil to the skin once a week for kapha constitution, every other day for pitta constitution and every day for vata constitution. Applying oil to the skin also nourishes the muscles and lubricates the joints. Oil is to be applied to the entire body including the scalp. The ayurvedic herbal pharmacy contains hundreds of medicinal herbal oils, which are prescribed for various ailments. Coconut oil can be used to reduce heat in the body. Almond oil nourishes the bones and nervous system and keeps the body warm in the winter. Olive oil pacifies vata and pitta. Sesame oil balances vata, pitta and kapha.

Ashtanga yoga guru, Sri K Pattabhi Jois recommended applying castor oil to the entire body once a month, to reduce pains in the body and to eliminate toxins from the body. At first, castor oil should only be absorbed for a few minutes and then washed off. Because it is a potent oil it should ideally be practised under guidance of an Ayurvedic specialist especially if you are a beginner to the subject. Many oils such as jasmine, coconut and jojoba can be safely used at home, following Ayurvedic guidance.



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The skin also absorbs water as well as oxygen. The health of the skin is important for the overall health and nourishment of the body. To maintain the health of the skin it is important to drink eight glasses of water each day. Water helps the kidneys and liver function correctly and keeps the skin hydrated.

Ayurveda recommends a number of herbs for skin health. Neem is a herb that can be taken internally to purify the blood and skin. Neem reduces blemishes, rashes and itching. Turmeric is a powerful herb that purifies the skin and reduces blemishes. Turmeric can also reduce inflammation in the joints. Skin is sensitive and it is important to limit sun exposure. Aloe vera can heal the skin from sun exposure.

Yoga poses, which stimulate the liver and kidneys help to detoxify the blood and maintain the health of the skin. This short sequence of poses aid in the detoxification of the body and maintain skin health.





BITILASANA MARJARASANA, cat-cow posture. Position yourself on the hands and knees. Place the knees hip width apart and hands underneath the shoulders. Inhale into bitilasana, cow pose by lifting the sit bones, arching the spine down, lifting the head and looking up. Exhale into marjarasana, cat pose, by extending the tail bone down, arching the spine up, reaching the chin toward the chest and looking toward the navel. Repeat ten times, extending the length of the breath throughout the movement.

ASHTANGASANA, eight-limbed pose. Curl the toes under, lower the chest down to the floor between the hands and place

the chin on the floor. Breathe deeply for ten breaths. Then straighten the arms and lift the chest back up off of the floor. Repeat ashtangasana.

PURVOTTANASANA, stretching of the easy pose. Sit on the floor with a straight spine and the legs together extended forward. Place the hands on the floor behind the hips with the fingers pointing in the direction of the legs. Point the toes, inhaling raise the hips until the legs are in line with the spine and arch the head back. Arch the head back and look into the forehead. Breathe deeply for ten breaths. Then lower the hips back down to the floor. Repeat purvottanasana.



ARDHA

MATSYENDRASANA,

half lord of the fishes posture. Bend the knees and place the left foot to the right of the right hip, underneath the right leg. Step the right foot to the left of the left knee. Twist to the right and reach the left upper arm to the outside of the right thigh and

reach toward the right foot. Look to the right and breathe deeply for ten breaths. Wrap the right arm around the torso to the right and reach to the left hip. Then practice the ardha matsyendrasana on the left side. Practice ardha matsyendrasana two times on each side.



DHANURASANA,

bow pose. Lie on the stomach. Bend the knees, with the feet together, lift the head and take hold of the shins below the ankles with the hands. Point the toes. Raise the hands and feet, arch the spine, tilt the head back and look up into the forehead. Breathe deeply for ten breaths. Repeat dhanurasana.



USTRASANA, camel pose. Stand on the knees with the knees hip width apart and the toes pointing straight back. Press the hips forward, arch the spine back, lower the hands to the soles of the feet and arch the head back. Breathe deeply for ten breaths. Press the hips forward until you lift back up onto your knees. Repeat ustrasana.

SAVASANA, corpse pose. Lie on the back, with the palms of the hands facing up. Close the eyes and relax all the muscles in the body.

