



Karuna Yoga Newsletter

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YOGA THERAPY

STRENGTHENING THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

The immune system is the defence mechanism of the body and protects us from disease. Its main agent is the blood, a fluid consisting of plasma and red and white blood cells. It is the white cells that inhibit the invasion of the bloodstream by micro-organisms. There are two types of immunity: natural and acquired. Yoga strengthens both, and regular practice of the recommended asanas can help to counter the disorders that affect them.


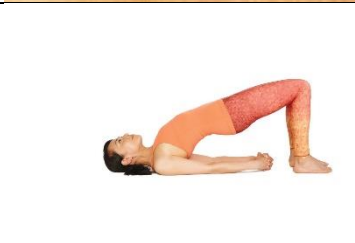






If the body's immunity is impaired, the result can be a wide spectrum of illnesses including increased susceptibility to infections, fatigue, fevers, and malignant disorders.

Ways to get well and stay well.

- **Eat plenty of plants.** Diet and nutrition are directly linked to immunity. Eating green vegetables could be enough to improve immune defence. Fresh vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, and other healthy plant foods rich in nutrients can literally change our immunity. A high-fibre diet activates T cells and increases the antiviral immune response, increasing influenza survival rates.
- **Laugh every day.** Laughing helps to push lymphatic fluid through the lymph nodes, where T and B-cell lymphocytes are produced, and these are our body's primary immune cells. I know that some people feel they don't have anything to laugh about. A friend of mine teaches laughter yoga. Someone starts laughing and before long lots of other people are laughing. Try this at home.
- **Reduce sugar in your diet.** Sugary, starchy foods are highly processed and lacking in nutrients and essential phyto-chemicals and antioxidants needed to neutralise free radical damage. Continuing to eat a diet high in sugar will result in increased inflammation, a weakened immunity system where bacteria and viruses can take over.
- **Consider taking a supplement.** In today's world, many immune-boosting vitamins and minerals are missing from even the healthiest foods. We need nutrients like zinc and selenium to help fight illness. Vitamin C, taken as liquid liposomes will increase absorption and help to fight illness. Vitamin D3 and magnesium deficiency can also impair immunity. Probiotics boost our immunity with friendly gut bacteria.
- **Find time to relax.** Give yourself permission to relax. If you feel stressed, take time to inhale and exhale slowly. Immune systems can become weak if you are not giving yourself time to relax and you don't have enough hours of sleep.

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YOGA POSTURES TO HELP STRENGTHEN THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

<p>LEGS RESTING ON THE SEAT OF A CHAIR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxes your upper body • Releases tension and tightness in the lower back • Gives you total permission to relax fully 	
<p>SETUBANDHA (bridge)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sends blood to the brain and helps alleviate stress and mild depression • Calms the flow of thoughts, soothes the mind • Reduces anxiety, fatigue, backache, headache, and insomnia 	
<p>SUPTA BADDHAKONASANA (reclining bound angle)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulates the ovaries, prostate gland, bladder, and kidneys • Stimulates the heart and improves circulation • Helps relieve stress and mild depression 	
<p>SUPTA VIRASANA (reclining hero posture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calms a restless and agitated mind • Reduces fatigue and stimulates the whole body • Enhances resistance to infections 	
<p>ADHOMUKHA SVANASANA (downward dog)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression • Energizes the body • Relieves headache, insomnia, back pain, and fatigue 	
<p>SALAMBA SIRASASANA (headstand)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression • Stimulates the pituitary and pineal glands • Strengthens the lungs 	
<p>SALAMBA SARVANGASANA (shoulderstand)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relieves insomnia and soothes the nerves • Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression • Stimulates the thyroid and prostate glands and abdominal organs 	
<p>HALASANA (plough)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces anxiety, fatigue, and insomnia • Soothes the nerves and relaxes the brain • Improves functioning of the thyroid gland 	
<p>VIPARITA KARANI (legs up the wall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves circulation of blood and hormones • Alleviates nervous exhaustion, boosts confidence, and reduces depression 	