



# Karuna Yoga Newsletter

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## YOGA THERAPY HEART AND CIRCULATION (PART 2)

The circulatory system deals with the whole body as it carries blood to and from the heart supplying oxygen and nutrients and carrying away waste products. The common disorders of this system are cold extremities, varicose veins, high and low blood pressure, blocked arteries, angina and heart attacks. I wrote about blocked arteries and heart attacks in last month's newsletter.

### **Cold Extremities**

This is caused by a slowdown in circulation, when blood collects in the torso and fails to correctly reach the extremities. It gives rise to ailments of the chest and of the intestinal and abdominal organs. It can be the result of a sluggish thyroid, stress or nervousness.

### **Varicose Veins**

In this condition, veins just beneath the skin of the legs are elongated and dilated, leading to aching legs, fatigue and muscle cramps. The condition often occurs during pregnancy and menstruation, and also those who have to stay on their feet for long periods.

### **High Blood Pressure (hypertension)**

This condition is defined as sustained, elevated blood pressure. It has many causes which include psychological, physiological and environmental factors.

### **Low Blood Pressure (hypotension)**

This condition occurs when blood pressure is less than normally required to transport blood to all parts of the body. This can reduce blood supply to the brain, resulting in fatigue, fainting, light-headedness, blurred vision or nausea.

### **Angina**

Angina pain characteristically radiates from the chest to the back, neck and arms and is accompanied by nausea, breathlessness and fatigue. Its causes include smoking, obesity, blocked arteries, hypertension and excessive alcohol consumption.

### **HEART NUTRIENTS**

The key is to keep your heart healthy with lifestyle choices. The body has a remarkable ability to respond to healthy habits, so it is never too late to develop them. A serious problem is **arrhythmias** of the heart where the heart beats faster than normal or beats erratically. Common substances that can cause a disruption of the heart's rhythm are coffee, tea, chocolate, soft drinks and alcohol. If you notice that anything upsets the rhythm of your heart then it is best to avoid them. Also important to avoid stress. Yoga and meditation can help to lower stress levels.

Sometimes a good diet is just not enough to maintain a healthy heart. If your diet is not so good on a daily basis, you may need a good **multivitamin** at the very least.








Omega 3 fatty acids such as **fish oil** are essential to heart health. One study of over 11,000 people taking omega 3 as a supplement showed a 45% reduction in sudden cardiac death.

**Vitamin B complex** containing all the B vitamins is also important to maintain heart health.

Of course, smoking and a lack of exercise are major factors in causing disorders of the heart.

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## POSTURES FOR THE HEART AND CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

<p><b>SUPTA PADANGUSTHASANA (reclining leg stretch)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves blood circulation in the legs</li> <li>• Therapeutic for high blood pressure</li> <li>• Increases flexibility in the pelvic area</li> <li>• Strengthens the hip joint and tones the lower spine</li> <li>• Helps to treat osteoarthritis of the hips and knees.</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">RORY EARNSHAW</p>
<p><b>ADHOMUKHA SVANASANA (downward dog)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings fresh blood to the heart and lungs</li> <li>• Cures breathlessness, palpitations and extreme fatigue</li> <li>• Stabilises blood pressure and heart rate</li> <li>• Increases flexibility of the hips, knees and ankles.</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">MARTY SCODUTO</p>
<p><b>PRASARITA PADOTTANASANA (wide-legged forward bend)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energises the heart and lungs</li> <li>• Reduces high blood pressure</li> <li>• Increases blood flow to the brain and soothes the brain</li> <li>• Strengthens the knee joints.</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">RORY EARNSHAW</p>
<p><b>UPAVISTA KONASANA (wide-angle seated forward bend)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rests the heart and normalises pulse rate</li> <li>• Reduces angina pain</li> <li>• Improves blood circulation in the pelvis</li> <li>• Regulates blood supply to the adrenal and thyroid glands.</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">RORY EARNSHAW</p>
<p><b>JANU SIRSASANA (head to knee forward bend)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rests the heart and activates the heart chakra</li> <li>• Reduces angina pain</li> <li>• Helps to normalise blood pressure</li> <li>• Sharpens the memory</li> <li>• Stimulates the liver and kidneys.</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">MARTIN SCODUTO</p>
<p><b>MARICHYASANA (torso twist)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases blood circulation to the abdominal organs</li> <li>• Brings fresh blood to the liver and kidneys</li> <li>• Aids digestion</li> <li>• Alleviates lower backache.</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">MARTY SCODUTO</p>
<p><b>VIPARITA KARANI (inverted lake or legs up the wall)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulates blood pressure</li> <li>• Relieves palpitations and breathlessness</li> <li>• Relieves asthma, bronchitis and throat ailments</li> <li>• Improves circulation and prevents varicose veins</li> <li>• Helps to treat ear and eye ailments</li> <li>• Alleviates arthritis</li> <li>• Relieves indigestion and nausea.</li> </ul>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">MICHAEL VENERA</p>