

**"YOGA POSES TO KEEP ATHLETES INJURY FREE"**

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ABSTRACT:

Yoga is a physical, mental, and spiritual discipline. One of the goals of yoga is for the attainment of a state of perfect spiritual insight and tranquility while meditating on Super soul. Both the meditative and the exercise components of yoga show promise for non-specific health benefits. Yoga are varied and range from improving health to achieving Moksha. According to an article in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, the system of Hatha yoga believes that prana, or healing "life energy" is absorbed into the body through the breath, and can treat a wide variety of illnesses and complaint.



The Players are expected to participate for several events and achieve well to secure a place at the higher level of their choice. The most common problems faced by Players while playing for play is that they are unable to concentrate. It is due to many reasons including lack of sleep, less energy and general tiredness. But there are ways to keep your mind relaxed and focused. Doing yoga will not only keep you calm but also improve your memory, concentration and will help Players to Improve their capacity in Competition . These are some yoga asanas that will help you in your performance. If you love sports you know that injuries come with the territory—caused by repetitive motion, imbalances in your biomechanics, or in many cases both! But if you practice yoga, you have a great tool at your disposal for preventing injuries.

A yoga practice encourages you to take inventory of your body as you practice. The more awareness you have of how your body feels from day to day or from pose to pose, the more likely you are to notice tight or injury-prone areas of the body that need attention before full-blown injuries can occur. In addition, yoga offers a combination of active and passive stretching that is especially helpful for keeping you injury free. Training to get stronger or faster can lead to tight muscles with a smaller range of motion, limited power, and a tendency to get injured more easily..

KEY WORDS: Yoga, Poses, Athletes, Concentration, and Injuries.

INTRODUCTION:

Yoga is a physical, mental, and spiritual discipline. One of the goals of yoga is for the attainment of a state of perfect spiritual insight and tranquility while meditating on Super soul. Both the meditative and the exercise components of yoga show promise for non-specific health benefits. Yoga are varied and range from improving health to achieving Moksha. According to an article in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, the system of Hatha yoga believes that prana, or healing "life energy" is absorbed into the body through the breath, and can treat a wide variety of illnesses and complaint.

Cackra-yoga has a medical sense of "applying a splint or similar instrument by means of pulleys (in case of dislocation of the thigh)". By all these yoga activities practices Athletes keeps injuries away.

These days Players are expected to appear in several Sports and Games Achieve good Position. Asana and pranayama are all effective way to boost memory and keep yourself calm while playing. Here are 5 yoga asana for Players to improve memory and concentration during Performance.

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A yoga practice encourages you to take inventory of your body as you practice. The more awareness you have of how your body feels from day to day or from pose to pose, the more likely you are to notice tight or injury-prone areas of the body that need attention before full-blown injuries can occur. In addition, yoga offers a combination of active and passive stretching that is especially helpful for keeping you injury free. Training to get stronger or faster can lead to tight muscles with a smaller range of motion, limited power, and a tendency to get injured more easily. Active stretching, where the body is moving and stretching dynamically (as in Sun Salutations, for example), creates warmth and suppleness in the tissues. Passive stretching, where you hold a posture for a minute or more in a way that's relaxed (as in the poses that follow), allows muscles to lengthen even more.

The following pages describe three of the most common injuries for athletes and some simple ways to address them with yoga. Many sports injuries tend to be chronic and these poses can be done preventively if you have a history of injury in particular areas. Subsides, but if you can do these poses comfortably, they may aid in your recovery (best to check with your health care practitioner first). On days that you train or work out, do these poses after your training session. On you're off days, warm up with 5 to 10 minutes of sun salutation or a brisk walk before doing these poses.

Feet:

The Injury: Plantar Fasciitis

One of the most common sports injuries to the foot is the inflammation of the plantar fascia, a band of tissue that connects the heel bone to the toes and runs along the sole of the foot. Stress from repetitive foot strikes as well as tightness in the Achilles tendon, ankle, and calf muscles can create too much tension in the plantar fascia, resulting in micro tears and inflammation. Left untreated, plantar fasciitis can cause bone spurs in the heel and contribute to knee, hip, and back pain.

Common in: Runners and those who do sports—such as soccer, football, golf, tennis, and volleyball—that involve running or jumping.

Symptoms: Pain on the heel or the sole of the foot that is typically worst when you first get out of bed in the morning.

Poses for Prevention and Healing: The poses here stretch the tissues on the back of the leg and the sole of the foot to reduce tension in the plantar fascia. Do these poses daily or every other day if you are recovering or are on the verge of an injury, and once a week or more for prevention.

Sole Stretch:

What it Does: Targets the muscles and connective tissue on the sole of the foot while stretching the deep layer of calf muscles that moves the toes and supports the arch of the foot.

How to: Come onto your hands and knees and tuck your toes under. Slowly lean the weight of your hips back and sit on your heels. To start, keep your hands on the floor in front of you and keep some of your weight on your hands as you sit back. As the pose becomes comfortable, you can progress to sitting upright with all of your weight on your heels, palms in your lap. This might be an intense stretch, but you should not feel pain. Hold for 30 to 90 seconds as you breathe easily.

Reclining Hand-to-Big-Toe Pose (Supta Padangusthasana)

What it Does: Stretches the hamstrings and the entire line of tissue that runs along the back of the hip, thigh, and calf, which tugs on the sole of the foot when it gets tight.

How to: Lie on your back, put a strap around the ball of the right foot, and extend your right leg up. Keep your head and shoulders on the floor and grab the strap with both hands. (To make this pose easier, bend your left leg and place the sole of the foot on the ground.) You can bend the right knee if you need to, but keep your thigh close to your belly as you lightly push into the strap with the ball of your right foot. Hold for 1 to 2 minutes, and repeat on the other side.

Sole Stretch



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Reclining Hand-to-Big-Toe Pose (Supta Padangusthasana)



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Eye-of-the-Needle Pose (Sucirandhrasana)

What it Does: Relieves the tight hips that are common in athletes who do a lot of running, limiting the movement of the leg muscles, putting more stress on the back of the leg, and increasing tension in the plantar fascia.

How to: Lie on the floor with both feet on the wall and your knees bent. Place the right ankle on the left knee and flex the right foot. With your right hand, gently push the right thigh, just above the knee, away from your head. Keep your hips, spine, and head on the floor and relax your neck. You can make this harder by moving closer to the wall or easier by moving farther away. To get an even deeper stretch, clasp your hands behind your left hamstring and hug it in toward your torso, with your head still on the ground. Hold for 1 to 2 minutes, and repeat on the other side.

Eye-of-the-Needle Pose (Sucirandhrasana)



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Knees

The Injury: Iliotibial Band Syndrome

One of the most common causes of knee pain in athletes is the irritation of the iliotibial band (IT band), a thick band of fascia that runs from the top of the outer hip to just below the outer knee. It's a common misconception that stretching the IT band itself will fix this. The band is simply a fibrous sheet; the surrounding muscles are the cause of the problem. Often, the hip muscles that attach to the IT band become tight, creating tension along the band. In this scenario, running or walking can create friction, causing the tissues to thicken and bind which pulls on the knee and causes pain.

Common in: Runners, cyclists, hikers, and in soccer, basketball, and tennis players.

Symptoms: Outer knee pain that can extend behind the knee or down the outer calf, pain in the outer hip or thigh, swelling around the knee, and snapping or popping sounds with knee movement.

Poses for Prevention and Healing: The following poses stretch the muscles of the hips and thighs that pull on the IT band, and keep the band and the surrounding tissues flexible and pliable to reduce friction and injury.

Standing Forward Bend, variation (Uttanasana)

What it Does: Stretches the hamstrings where they meet the IT band

How to: Come to standing and cross your right ankle over your left. With your knees slightly bent, fold forward and rest your hands on the floor, a block, or a chair. Reach your sitting bones toward the sky and move your ribs away from your pelvis to prevent your back from rounding. Hold, breathing comfortably, for 1 minute, and then repeat, crossing your left ankle over right.

Standing Forward Bend, variation (Uttanasana)



Yoga Poses to Stretch Tight Hip Flexors

Low Lunge, variation (Anjaneyasana)

What it Does: Stretches the difficult-to-reach tensor fasciae latae at the top of the IT band.

How to: Come to a Low Lunge with your right leg forward. Lift the hips up and back until they are directly over the knee on the ground. The tendency in this pose is to lean the pelvis forward and stretch the hip flexors but in this variation you want to keep your hips over your back knee (move your front foot back if you need to). Without over-arching the lower back, place your right hand on your right thigh

and extend the left hand overhead and to the right. You should feel this in the outer hip of the left leg. Hold, breathing comfortably, for 30 to 60 seconds, and then repeat on the other side.

Supine cow Face Pose (SuptaGomukhasana)

What it Does: Stretches the gluteus maximus muscles, which attach to the IT band.

How to: Lie on your back and cross one knee over the other. Keeping your head on the floor, hug your knees in toward your chest. If you feel a good stretch, stay here. If you don't, flex your feet, grab your ankles, and pull them toward your hips. Hold for 1 minute, and then repeat with your legs crossed the other way.



Low Lunge, variation (Anjaneyasana)

4. Shoulders

The Injury: Rotator Cuff Inflammation or Tear

The rotator cuff is a group of four muscles that stabilizes the upper arm bone in the shoulder socket and allows the shoulder to rotate. The tendons of these muscles often become irritated, or they can be torn due to a traumatic injury or repetitive motion, especially in combination with weakness in the muscles that stabilize the shoulder blade and anchor the rotator cuff.

Common in: Swimmers, yoga practitioners, rock climbers, golfers, and tennis players.

Symptoms: Because the rotator cuff involves four muscles and their tendons, a wide range of symptoms can be associated with it. Generally, pain is felt over the top of the shoulder, but it can extend to almost anywhere around the shoulder joint itself, including the shoulder blade or the armpit.

Poses for Prevention and Healing: By strengthening the muscles around the shoulder joint and restoring range of motion to the rotator cuff, you can create a stronger, more supportive structure to move from and decrease your chance of injury—or facilitate your recovery.



Cow Face Pose, variation (Gomukhasana)

What it Does: Stretches the entire rotator cuff with a combination of internal and external rotation of the arms. (If your shoulders are tight, you can do this pose in a warm shower or grab on to a strap or towel if you can't reach your hands.)

Supine cow Face Pose (SuptaGomukhasana)**Cow**

How to: From a seated or standing position, reach your left arm straight out to the left, parallel to the floor. Rotate your arm inwardly; the thumb will turn first toward the floor, then point toward the wall behind you, with the palm facing the ceiling. This movement will roll your left shoulder slightly up and forward, and will round your upper back. With a full exhalation, sweep the arm behind your torso and tuck the forearm in the hollow of your lower back, parallel to your waist, with the left elbow against the left side of your torso. Roll the shoulder back and down; then work the forearm up your back until it feels parallel to your spine. The back of your hand will be between your shoulder blades.

Inhale and stretch your right arm straight forward, parallel to the floor. Turn the palm up, inhale, and stretch your arm straight up toward the ceiling, palm turned back. Bend your elbow and reach down for the left hand. If you can, clasp your hands. If you can't reach, start over with a towel or strap in your overhead hand. Hold for 1 minute, and then repeat on the other side.

Plank Pose, variation

What it Does: Strengthens the muscles that stabilize the shoulder blade, which will provide a strong foundation for the rotator cuff.

How to: Come into tabletop position. As you exhale, without bending your elbows, lower your rib cage toward the floor and draw your shoulder blades toward each other. As you inhale, push the floor away, pull your rib cage away from the floor, and, without rounding the spine, spread your shoulder blades apart.

Once you have the motion, come into Plank Pose and try the same movement there. Visualize your shoulder blades gliding toward and away from each other around your rib cage. Repeat 10 times, rest for a few breaths, and repeat. As your muscles grow stronger, work your way up to 15 or 20 repetitions.

Side Plank Pose, variation (Vasisthasana)

What it Does: Strengthens the muscles of the rotator cuff and teaches them to work as an integrated unit.

How to: Come onto your forearms, with your elbows under your shoulders and your feet together. Roll onto the edge of your right foot and turn your right forearm in 45 degrees. Hug your right arm bone into the socket and press the base of your right index finger into the floor. Lift and lengthen the sides of the rib cage and extend your left arm up. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds,

It's all in the IT Band

Focus on hip openers as well as quadriceps and hamstring stretches in your yoga practice to reduce the pull on the IT band.

Use a foam roller to release tension in the IT band. To reach the high-friction zone between the quadriceps and the IT band, imagine that your thigh is a shoe box: The outside of the thigh is one side of the box, and the front of the thigh is another side.

Relax: It's the Best Medicine.

In yoga practice and throughout the day, focus on relaxing your shoulder blades down the back. Tension in the upper back can hike the humeral head higher in the socket and cause wear on the top of the rotator cuff.

If you sit at a computer all day, take regular stretching breaks to reduce tension in the muscles of the shoulders, neck, and chest.

Rotator cuff injuries are common among vinyasa yoga students. Upward-facing Dog pose to reduce your chance of injury.

Plank Pose, variation



Side Plank Pose, variation (Vasishthasana)

Simple Tips for Better Performance and Fewer Injuries:

Warm Up and Cool Down. Warming up allows the blood to move into the muscles slowly so the fascia can expand to accommodate the demands of the upcoming activity. Walk for a few minutes or take a short, dynamic online yoga class aimed at pre-sport warm-ups before you train or play. Afterward, stretch for at least 20 minutes.

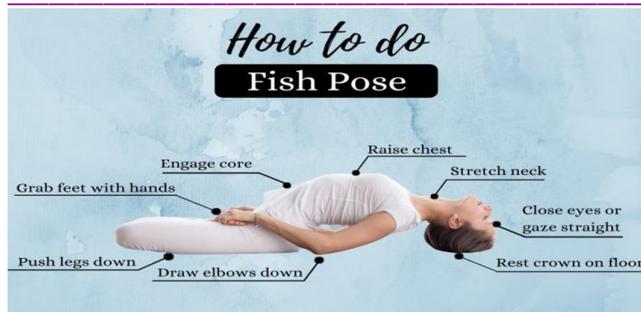
Soothe. Soak in a warm Epsom salt bath after exercise to relax tired muscles and absorb magnesium sulphate, which can help alleviate soreness.

Rest Easy. Muscle tissue heals and rebuilds during sleep, so don't skimp on the shuteye, especially on hard workout days.

Mind Your Minerals. Look for a sports drink that replaces minerals (especially calcium, magnesium, and potassium) that are lost through sweat, contributing to muscle soreness and cramping. Post workout, refuel with foods high in magnesium and potassium, such as chard, kale, and cantaloupe.

Matsyasana How to do it: (Fish Pose)

Lie on your back. Your feet are together and hands relaxed alongside the body. Place the hands underneath the hips. Bring the elbows closer. Breathing in, lift the head and chest up. Keeping the chest elevated, lower the head backwards and touch the top of the head to the floor. Press the elbows firmly into the ground, placing the weight on the elbow and not on the head. Lift your chest up. Press the thighs and legs to the floor. Hold the pose for as long as you comfortably can, taking gentle long breaths in and out. Relax in the posture with every exhalation. Now lift the head up, lowering the chest and head to the floor. Bring the hands back along the sides of the body and relax.



Virasana (Hero Pose)

How to do it: Start by kneeling down and keep your inner thighs and knees together. Now, move your feet outward and sit back. Your legs should be on your side and your knees should be on the floor. Hold this position for a couple of minutes and return to the original position.

Benefits of it: Stretches the thigh, knees and ankles Improves digestion and relieves gas Good for high blood pressure



Suryanamaskar

How to do it:

Stand straight with your feet together and your hands in the prayer position. Stretch your body and raise your hands above your head. Lean forwards and bring your hands to your feet. Try to touch your toes. Place your palms on the floor firmly and push back your left leg. Take back your right foot to reach your left foot. Your whole body should be in a straight line. Bring your knees on the floor. Your feet, knees, hand, chin and chest will be on the floor. Now, come to the downward dog pose. Bring your right foot near your hands. Bring in the left foot also. Bring your body up and stretch it with your hands above your head. Bring your hand to your chest exactly like the first step. Do three rounds of suryanamaskar every day in the morning.

Benefits of it:

Suryanamaskar must be practice by everyone for a healthy mind and body. It includes 12 poses, which engages different parts and organs of your body. It improves the flexibility and strength of the mind and body. It also keeps your mind relax and calm.



Bhramari pranayam (Bee breathing)

How to do it:

Sit straight in a comfortable position with your eyes closed and close your ears with your index finger. Now, take a deep breath and make humming sound like a bee. (It would be beneficial if you make high-pitched sound.) Do this three to five times.

Benefits of it:

The noise of bhramari's buzzing can drown out the endless mental tape loops that can fuel emotional suffering, making it a useful starting point for those whose minds are too busy to meditate.



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Vajrasana (Diamond or thunderbolt pose)

How to do it:

Begin by kneeling down on the floor. Now, sit back on your heels. Make sure your back, neck and head are in a line. Hold this position for about 10 minutes. You can concentrate on your breathing while doing this pose.

Benefits of it:

Vajrasana is a simple asana that will improve blood flow and digestion. It calms your mind and improves your concentration.



CONCLUSION:

Incorporating yoga into an athlete's training regimen can be a game-changer for preventing injuries and boosting performance. By improving flexibility, strength, and balance, yoga helps athletes move more efficiently and reduces the risk of injury. Some key yoga poses for athletes include: Through yoga Asanas Athletic sports injuries can be prevented and avoided, yoga has effective Asanas for preventing injury, asanas, and also **enhances sports performances, flexibility, endurance and stamina**. Yoga, in nutshell, is to improve overall well-being through asanas.

REFERENCES:

1. Downward-Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana): Stretches hamstrings, calves, and shoulders, while relieving tightness and improving mobility.
- Pigeon Pose (Eka Pada Rajakapotasana): Releases deep tension in hips and glutes, improving range of motion and reducing injury risk.
- Bridge Pose (Setu Bandhasana): Strengthens glutes and hamstrings, while opening tight hip flexors.
- Warrior II (Virabhadrasana II): Builds leg strength, stability, and hip flexibility.
- Child's Pose (Balasana): Releases full-body tension and calms the nervous system.
2. These poses can help athletes recover faster, improve flexibility, and prevent future injuries. As noted by Nike, "A regular yoga practice prevents injury, enhances muscle function, and combats stress — three key components of sports performance" ^{1 2}.
3. Would you like to know more about specific yoga poses for different sports or how to incorporate yoga into your training routine?

DO YOGA BE HEALTHY

