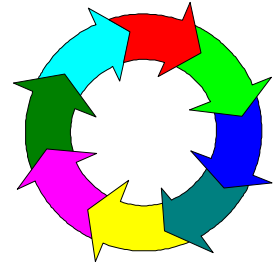


ASANA

CHAKRASANA

Wheel posture



No mention in the classical texts. However, the symbol of the Wheel of Life and the energy in the chakras is a recurring theme which ties up with the reputed purpose and effect of this asana.

METHOD

1. Lie on the back and lengthen spine.
2. Bend knees with feet and palms flat on floor and go up into a bridge raise.
3. Raise up higher and place the crown of head on the floor.
4. Bring the feet a little closer to buttocks and arms behind to floor.
5. Place the palms flat onto the floor, with fingers pointing to the head.
6. On an in breath, push up through arms and raise solar plexus to the ceiling.
7. Lock the arms.
8. Try to have palms directly under the shoulders and the feet flat under the hips. This will depend sometimes upon the body build of the person, as to its final position.
9. Breathe slowly and **lower slowly**.

PREPARATION

All these following asanas need to be learnt to a good standard before moving on to chakrasana-

1. Bhujangasana (cobra)
2. Dhanurasana (bow)
3. Matsyasana (fish)
4. Supta vajrasana (supine thunderbolt)
5. Ustrasana.(camel)

Difficulty with any of the postures listed above is a **contraindication** for chakrasana.



COUNTERPOSE

A simple folding or resting position.

VARIATIONS FOR THE EXPERIENCED

1. Bring feet and hands closer together.
2. Start from a standing position.

MODIFICATIONS

1. Work through as in METHOD from 1 to 6.
2. Lie over a padded chair, hold sides and slowly uncurl backwards leaving the head until last or remaining with chin on chest if not too sure.
3. As above but with a partner to support the head.
4. As above but with arms back as well.
5. Have a partner to firmly hold and steady the ankles for the lift, or, hold on to the standing partner's ankles to steady.
6. The advanced can stand with their back to the wall and walk their hands down, making sure their feet don't slip.

CONTRA-INDICATIONS, PRECAUTIONS AND PROHIBITIONS

1. **Prohibited** for pregnancy.
2. Recent surgery.
3. Carpal tunnel syndrome.
4. Arthritic wrists.
5. **Contra-indicated** for blood pressure and spinal curvatures.

Chakrasana does, however, tend to be a self-limiting asana.

BENEFITS AND EFFECTS

1. Directs circulation away from the centre so that:
2. the feet and hands benefit from increased circulation.
3. Stretches the solar plexus and encourages physical and mental extroversion, plus a feeling of warmth in the whole body.
4. Builds upper body strength.

5. Manipura chakra is stimulated.

MUSCLES AND JOINTS

As for Supta Vajrasana, in addition, strength needed in the quadriceps, deltoid, trapezius and wrists.

1. The cervical spine fully contracted and thyroid area stretched.
2. Thoracic spine fully contracted and the front of lungs expanded.
3. Pelvic joints stretched.
4. Muscles of the thigh can sometimes be foreshortened, keeping the knees from touching the floor or causing pain.
5. The rectus femoris is stretched in a straight line from its origin at the ilium to its attachment at the patella.
6. The sartorius is the longest muscle in the body and stretches obliquely from its origin at the crest of the ilium to its insertion just below the inside of the knee at the tibial shaft.
7. In arms back position, the flexibility of the dorsal is evident. Restriction shows in discomfort in deltoid and trapezius
8. The tibialis muscle stretches from the tibia (shin) and as it is attached to the big toe metatarsal joint at the front, it can sometimes precipitate cramp in the foot.
9. The annular ligament, which circles the front of the ankle, may also be tight particularly in men.
10. The strong contraction of the spine stimulates the spinal nerves on release.