


Yoga for Insomnia

Lack of sleep due to medications or stress can greatly affect your overall outlook on treatment and mood. This week we will focus on cooling pranayamas, grounding mudras and supported forward bends which will calm the nervous system and help to prepare the body and mind for sleep.

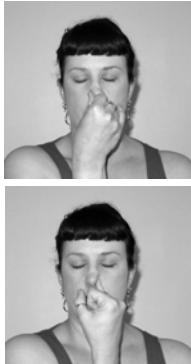
CENTERING

These preparation practices help to set the mood and intention for healing to take place.

	<p>Chant AHHH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begin seated comfortably• Take a deep inhale into the lower abdomen• As you exhale chant AHHH• Benefits: Helps release deeply held stress and tension
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PRANAYAMA

This breathing practice helps to calm and quiet the mind to prepare for sleep.

	<p>Chandra Bhedana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• With right hand close right nostril with thumb and left nostril with pinkie finger in the following pattern:• Inhale through left nostril• Pause at the top of the inhalation• Then exhale through the right nostril• Pause at the bottom of the exhalation.• Benefits: Stimulates parasympathetic nervous system. Draws cool calming energy in through the left nostril and releases warm active energy out through the right nostril.
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MUDRA

These mudras help to ground the energy of the mind to reduce the swirling thoughts which can prevent sleep. awake

	<p>Dvimukham Mudra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold hands facing upwards at belly• Touch tips of ring and pinkie fingers together• Benefits: Enhances deep relaxation, reduces stress
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Chinmaya Mudra

- Curl fingers into fist with thumbs and index finger tips joined
- Rest hands palm down on knees
- **Benefits:** Reduces stress and anxiety, enhances sense of trust

ASANA

This week we will practice simple forward bends using the support of a chair to help surrender the body and mind and prepare for sleep. Be sure to only come forward within a comfortably and easy range of motion, keeping the spine long and the breath easy.



Easy Supported Forward Bend with Chair

- Sit on edge of folded blanket in front of a chair with legs crossed. Inhale to lengthen the spine and place a bolster vertically in lap. Lean forward on to the bolster which is supported by the chair. Turn head to one side and rest arms in chair seat.
- **Benefits:** Gently stretches hips and back, helps to release tension in the back while surrendering the mind.



Baddha Konasana with Chair

- Sit on edge of folded blanket in front of a chair with soles of feet together and knees apart, support knees if needed. Inhale to lengthen the spine and place a bolster vertically in lap. Lean forward on to the bolster which is supported by the chair. Turn head to one side and rest arms in chair seat.
- **Benefits:** Gently stretches groins and hips; helps to release tension in the back while surrendering the mind.

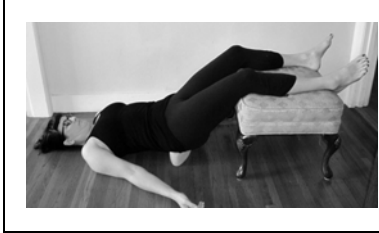


Upavistha Konasana with Chair

- Sit on edge of folded blanket in front of a chair with legs straddling the chair. Inhale to lengthen the spine and place a bolster vertically in front of torso. Lean forward on to the bolster which is supported by the chair. Turn head to one side and rest arms in chair seat.
- **Benefits:** Gently stretches inner thighs and groins, helps to release tension in the back while surrendering the mind.

RESTORATIVE

This restorative will help to induce relaxation to help prepare for sleep.



Instant Maui

- Lie on back with legs in the seat of a chair. Lift pelvis off floor and place block or a folded blanket under pelvis. Place arms away from sides and palms up.
- Rest 15 minutes.
- **Benefits:** Induces relaxation response, reduces swelling of feet and legs, relaxes lower back

INSOMNIA MEDITATION

Imagine that you are standing in front of an open doorway. You see soft light emanating from inside the doorway and as you look in, you notice a long winding stairwell moving downward. Create this stairwell clearly in your mind, is there a railing, what does the surface of the stairs look like? Is it stone, wood or carpet? You gaze down the steps and begin to look forward to what lies at the bottom. Without hurry, you move through the doorway and begin to descend the steps, you feel the surface upon which you are walking as you move further and further down. The stairway is long and winding and with each step you feel more and more relaxed. Moving toward some long awaited delight and away from the worries and burdens of the day. You are surrounded by a soft glow of light and warmth, completely safe and at ease. Continue to move down the stairwell, With each step you feel more and more at ease, the concerns of your life move further and further away from your consciousness. Around the next bend, you notice the stairs come to another doorway. You open the door to your own bedroom, it is comfortable, warm and the bed looks inviting. You lie down on your bed and recognize that this is what you have awaited, a comfortable quiet place to rest. Imagine closing your eyes and releasing the weight of your body down into the cushions.

Become a witness of awareness ... not the body, not the senses, not the mind, nothing but awareness. Become aware that you are observing yourself. Try to be aware of the one who is looking, who is aware of what you have been doing so far. You can imagine the shape of your body resting. Now imagine your awareness as separate from your body ... your awareness floats above your body with a comforting weightlessness ... there is a silver cord connecting your awareness to your body ... a cord that can stretch as far as your imagination ... Imagine that your awareness moves towards the door of the room ... towards the door of the building ... and outside ... Imagine moving outside of the building ... see familiar things around you from your neighborhood ... there is no sense of effort or direction ... only lightness.

Your awareness begins moving up over the treetops. You see streets and houses laid out below you. You are directing the movement of your awareness without any particular destination. Just a floating sense of peace and ease. Where do you want to go next, perhaps to a certain location close to your home? Create an intention and allow your awareness to follow that direction, without effort or struggle. In this state of pure awareness, the ego begins to dissolve, there is no sense of self, only the pure freedom that resides at the center.

Is there a place in your imagination that you would like to visit? Perhaps a place you have read about or seen in a film. Create this imaginary location clearly in your mind – what does the landscape look like? See the rich colors of this place. **YOU ARE COMPLETELY SAFE.** Who are the other people that you notice? What kinds of interactions are you seeking? At any time feel free to allow this visualization to dissolve into a lucid dreaming state, where the only limits are your imagination. You can visit any wondrous place, those real or imagined. **YOU ARE UNWORRIED.** You can interact with any person, animal or spiritual guide. Know that you can always return to your body, the same way that you came but for now allow your awareness to continue floating along with whatever sensations are arising.

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You are safe
You are warm
You are unworried
You deserve to be well-rested

Begin now to release the visualization and allow your mind and body to find perfect stillness and peace. Allow your awareness to drift between thoughts and sensations towards a place of restful sleep. Know that you will awaken in the morning feeling refreshed and rejuvenated.