


Yoga for Digestion

Both constipation and diarrhea can be caused by some radiation and chemotherapy treatments. Stress also creates unconscious holding in the abdomen as we try to literally hold ourselves together. The key is to soothe the digestive system by not overheating the system and our focus this week will be on gentle twists and lateral bends that will gently massage the abdominal organs.

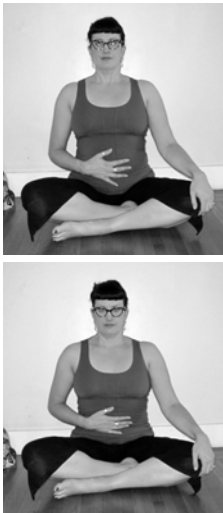
CENTERING

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

	<p>Chant RUM - BUM - LUM - DHUM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RUM activates the liver, stomach and pancreas kindling the fire to digest food• BUM activates the spleen.• LUM activates the absorption and assimilation• DHUM brings comfort to the process• <u>Benefits:</u> Helps balance the digestive system
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PRANAYAMA

This breathing practice helps to activate the internal digestive fire.



	<p>Bastrika</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sit comfortably in a chair or on the floor.• Begin by watching your natural breath pattern for a few moments.• Then begin to forcefully inhale through the nose while expanding the belly quickly• Forcefully exhale through the nose while pulling in the belly nose quickly.• Repeat for up to 10 rounds at a time, monitoring the affects.• <u>Benefits:</u> This breath kindles agni, the digestive fire.
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MUDRA

These mudras help to bring awareness and energy to the digestive process.



	<p>Jala Mudra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Touch tips of thumb and pinkie fingers together• Extend the other fingers straight• Rest backs of hands on knees• <u>Benefits:</u> Increases fluidity of body, supports digestive and eliminatory health
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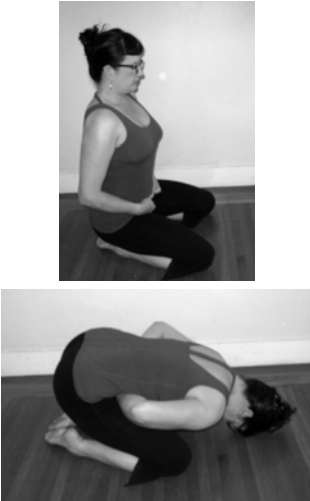
Yoga for Digestion

	<p>Achala Agni Mudra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make hands into fists with thumbs touching second joint of middle finger • Extend index fingers straight • Touch sides of index finger tips together as well as knuckles of each hand • <u>Benefits:</u> Supports physical and emotional digestion
	<p>Apanayana Mudra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make hands into soft fists with thumbs inside • Extend the index and pinkie fingers straight • Rest backs of hands on knees • <u>Benefits:</u> Supports eliminatory health, eases IBS symptoms

ASANA



These flowing postures help to bring movement into the abdominal area to keep things moving.

	<p>Z-Pose Cat/Cow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with right leg externally rotated, left leg internally rotated with left toes in line with right knee. • Inhale arch back lift head tilting tail back. Drop pubic bone towards floor and belly forward. Draw elbows back to open the chest. • Exhale round back engaging lower abdominal muscles. Tuck tail under, round upper back and drop head bringing elbows forward to open upper back. • Repeat 5-10 times per side with the breath. • <u>Benefits:</u> Re-balances the musculature and energy of the pelvis.
	<p>Z-Pose Hip Press</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with right leg externally rotated, left leg internally rotated with left toes in line with right knee. • Place right hand on floor beside hip. • Inhale press left hip forward raise left arm overhead (you can also keep left hand on hip). • Exhale reach left arm back towards left toes as you sit down on left buttock. • Repeat 5-10 times per side with the breath. • <u>Benefits:</u> Brings movement and fluidity into the pelvis.

	<p>Z-Pose Dolphin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with left leg externally rotated, right leg internally rotated with right toes in line with left knee. • Turn the torso to the left and place hands on either side of left knee. • As you exhale curl tail bone under lean slightly back, bend elbows and drop torso forward. • As you inhale scoop chin, chest and belly forward and up. • Repeat 5-10 times per side with the breath. • Benefits: Brings movement and fluidity into pelvis. low back and abdomen..
	<p>Z-Pose Pigeon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with left leg externally rotated, right leg internally rotated with right toes in line with left knee. Turn the torso to the left and line up the navel to the left knee. Walk hands out on either side of left knee. • Lay forward supporting on arms on floor, rest head on hands or blocks. • Hold for 10-20 breaths. • Benefits: Opens the outer hip and stretches the lower back. In this alternative to Eka Pada Rajakapotasana less weight is placed on the knee which makes it easier for those with arthritis.
	<p>Childs with Fists in Belly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit on heels and place fists into lower belly • Lie over hands to come into Childs Pose. • Use support under shins, between ankles and buttocks or under head if needed • Hold this position still or make small circles with the right fist then with the left fist • Benefits: Activates peristalsis which is helpful for constipation

RESTORATIVE

These restorative postures alternately put gentle pressure on the abdomen then relax and stretch the abdomen to ensure proper energy flow.

	<p>Flapping Fish Pose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay on belly with hands under forehead and elbows out to the sides. • Draw right knee up and lean upper torso toward the right so that the elbow and knee come close together. • Hold for up to 3 minutes per side • <u>Benefits:</u>
	<p>Supta Baddha Konasana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit in front of two long-fold blankets or a bolster parallel to mat. Place soles of feet together and let knees move apart resting on blocks or bolster. Place looped strap around back of pelvis between thighs and over outside edge of feet to help lengthen low back. Lie back over bolster and place blanket under head. Rest 5-15 minutes, then release • <u>Benefits:</u> Relaxes floor of pelvis, opens belly and chest, creates a sense of safety and calm

MEDITATION

Lay down in a comfortable position and take a few long slow deep breaths in and out. Begin to imagine that you are walking along a peaceful stream in a wooded glade. You can hear the sound of water gurgling softly over the rocky stream bed and feel the cool moisture in the air. As you approach the water, you smell the damp earth beneath your feet. Walk to the edge of the running water and watch the movement you see there. Eddies and ripples form around smooth stones. Leaves and twigs float along the surface as the water flows past. You decide to take off your shoes and step into the shallow water. The stream is cool on your feet and shins and you feel the gentle pull of the current around your legs. Imagine that the water in which you stand could wash away the things in your life now that are no longer serving you; old emotional patterns, grudges, habits of thought or behavior. Allow the water to carry these burdens away from you so that you may develop more nurturing ways of being in the world. Feeling free from these burdens, return to the edge of the stream and climb out onto the dry ground.

Walk along the flowing water as the course meanders along its path, around rocks and collects in deep pools. Watch as the water follows the path of least resistance downward towards the ocean. You can hear the sound of the waves now and smell the salty marine air. As you stand at the lovely secluded beach, hear the waves crashing onto the shore and watch the uprush of water come on to the beach and the back wash of water recede into the oncoming waves. Imagine moving toward the swash of the waves. In the wet sand, use your finger to write a word that represents something you are ready to move beyond in your life, a mental habit or emotional tendency that you have out grown and are ready to relinquish. For the next few moments watch the surge of water dissolve the word you have written, each wave makes the word less and less distinct. The waves return this quality back to the sea where it can be cleansed and absorbed the limitless ocean. As you envision this scene, know this habit no longer has a hold over you. You are free from this pattern and the water has cleansed it from your mind and body.

Find a comfortable dry place to relax upon the sun warmed beach. Allow your body to come into a restful reclining position and close the eyes. Listen to the sound of the waves; their endless motion reminds you of the ebb and flow of your life. Sink into the knowledge that life is unfolding in sweetness and synchrony.