

Yoga To Enhance Memory

Memory is the capacity to retain and recall information about past and present incidents. Memory capacity is the ability to analyze and synthesize the assimilated information. The power of Memory varies among individuals.

In Sanskrit, the word 'Memory' is called 'Smriti' The Patanjali yoga sutras describe memory as 'an experienced object not being lost from the mind.'

"yogasgcittavrttinirodhah"

Here is one of many beautiful definitions of yoga. "Yoga is the ability to direct the mind exclusively toward an object and sustain that direction with no distraction." It means the state of one-pointed ness.

"tada drastuh svarupe vasthanam"

(then the ability to understand the object fully and correctly is apparent)

Yoga opens our minds. There are so many influences on the way we perceive, our memory may cause us to project ideas based on past experience and limit our current understanding. We become jaded, saddened by lives hardships, and eventually we come to expect a certain suffering.

"VRTTAYAH PANCATAYYAH KLISTAKLISTAH"

"There are five activities of the mind. Each has both beneficial and problematic potentials."

"PRAMANAVIPARYAYAVIKAKALPANIDRASMRTAYAH"

"The five activities of the mind are: comprehension, misapprehension, imagination, deep sleep, and memory."

In the following five sutras, Patanjali describes each of the above, allowing us to reflect on the mind with objectivity.

"PRATYAKSANUMANAGAMAH PRAMANANI"

"Comprehension is based on direct observation of the object, inference, and reference to reliable authorities."

In other words, for the mind to understand, we must have an experience of that which we are trying to grasp. "Direct observation" is sensory experience. "Inference" is the mind at work when a sensory experience is unavailable. It could be logic, or memory. "Reference to reliable authorities" would trust a teacher, a text, a close friend, to give accurate information.

In yoga, we strive to not only perceive, but also to KNOW the inherent truth in all things, and FIRST to know the inherent truth of ourselves.

"Viparyayo mithyajnanamatadrupapratistham"

"Misapprehension is that comprehension that is taken to be correct until more favorable conditions reveal the actual nature of the object."

How familiar is this story? We perceive something to be one way, and then later discover it is entirely different. How often do we project our preconceived notions onto present surroundings/people? Another goal of yoga is to help us learn to properly perceive things as they actually are.

Enhancing the memory is a great way to discover soul and self. When you have complete awareness, you will then be in touch with your soul and self.

There are many techniques available in the market to enhance the memory, like Puzzle Books, CD's etc. Yet one of the ancient and most effective lines of action is yoga. Practices of yoga have been used for centuries. People that have used yoga has benefited mentally and physically. Yoga is a relaxation technique that ancient sages invented to

assist the needy who suffered from mental disorders or physical conditions. This technique includes kriya, Pranayam, meditation and chanting. Yoga practices have proven to heal the soul and mind. Yoga encourages peace, making it easier to cope with stress.

Yoga and Memory: The Indisputable Link



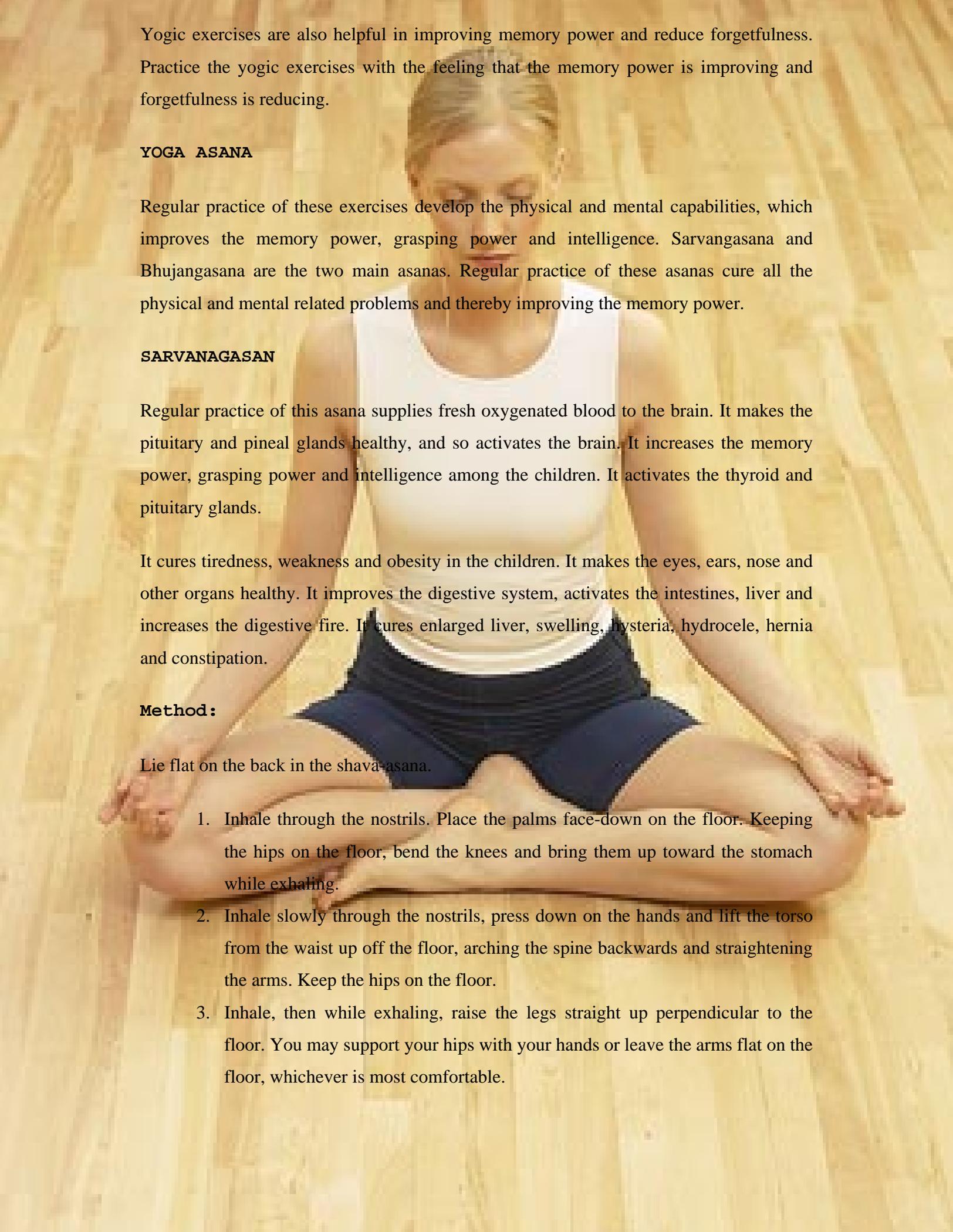
While memory is the latent capacity to retain and recall information, yoga assists in improving memory power through yogic techniques of concentration and meditation. The brain functions of attention, cognition, processing of sensory information and visual perception are honed with yogic practices.

In addition to its effect of balancing the doshas and strengthening the body, yoga also has the result of calming the mind, for yoga postures are performed in a slow, peaceful manner, with a centered mind. This has both an immediate calming effect and long term result of a calm and peaceful countenance.

Yogic practices like asanas, pranayama, meditation and Om chanting increase the circulation of blood to the brain. This helps calm the mind and enhances concentration skills. Memory lapses can also be prevented through yogic practices that enhance the power of recall. One can draw upon the immense power of the mind with consistent yogic endeavor.

When you fail to remember something, which you have read, heard or seen and cannot remember despite several efforts then it is called loss of memory power or forgetfulness. People of all age groups are suffering due to this problem. There are a number of reasons for this problem. For example, mental tension, excessive mental work or not using it at all, busy schedule throughout the day, physical and mental weakness or serious head injury.

Having a balanced diet and chewing it nicely, improves memory. Remember all the things done throughout the day in the chronological order. This exercise improves the memory power.

A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a white tank top and dark blue shorts, is sitting in a meditative pose on a light-colored wooden floor. She has her eyes closed and her hands resting on her knees in a mudra. The background is a plain wooden wall.

Yogic exercises are also helpful in improving memory power and reduce forgetfulness. Practice the yogic exercises with the feeling that the memory power is improving and forgetfulness is reducing.

YOGA ASANA

Regular practice of these exercises develop the physical and mental capabilities, which improves the memory power, grasping power and intelligence. Sarvangasana and Bhujangasana are the two main asanas. Regular practice of these asanas cure all the physical and mental related problems and thereby improving the memory power.

SARVANAGASAN

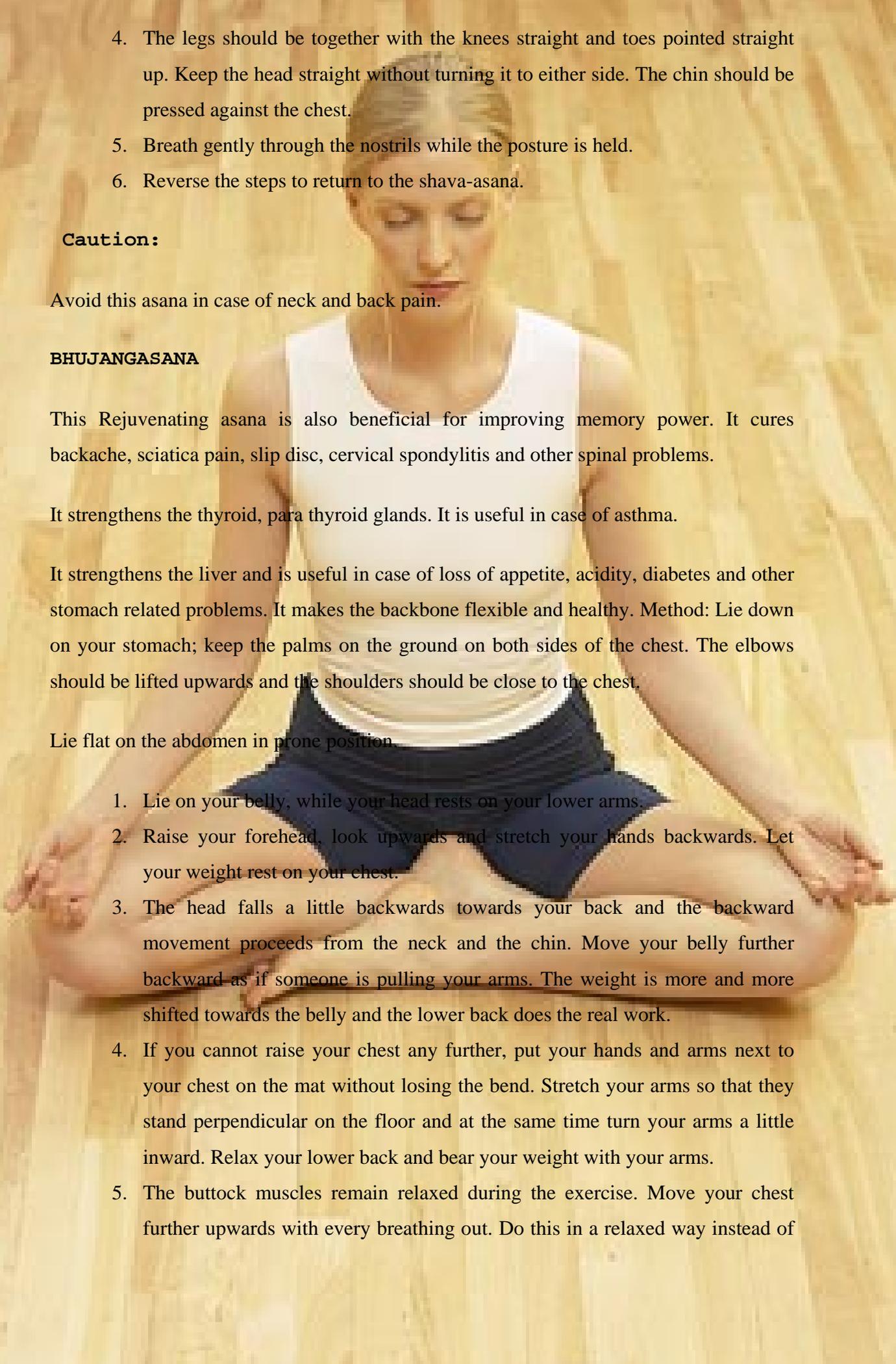
Regular practice of this asana supplies fresh oxygenated blood to the brain. It makes the pituitary and pineal glands healthy, and so activates the brain. It increases the memory power, grasping power and intelligence among the children. It activates the thyroid and pituitary glands.

It cures tiredness, weakness and obesity in the children. It makes the eyes, ears, nose and other organs healthy. It improves the digestive system, activates the intestines, liver and increases the digestive fire. It cures enlarged liver, swelling, hysteria, hydrocele, hernia and constipation.

Method:

Lie flat on the back in the shava-asana.

1. Inhale through the nostrils. Place the palms face-down on the floor. Keeping the hips on the floor, bend the knees and bring them up toward the stomach while exhaling.
2. Inhale slowly through the nostrils, press down on the hands and lift the torso from the waist up off the floor, arching the spine backwards and straightening the arms. Keep the hips on the floor.
3. Inhale, then while exhaling, raise the legs straight up perpendicular to the floor. You may support your hips with your hands or leave the arms flat on the floor, whichever is most comfortable.

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4. The legs should be together with the knees straight and toes pointed straight up. Keep the head straight without turning it to either side. The chin should be pressed against the chest.
 5. Breathe gently through the nostrils while the posture is held.
 6. Reverse the steps to return to the shava-asana.

Caution:

Avoid this asana in case of neck and back pain.

BHUJANGASANA

This Rejuvenating asana is also beneficial for improving memory power. It cures backache, sciatica pain, slip disc, cervical spondylitis and other spinal problems.

It strengthens the thyroid, para thyroid glands. It is useful in case of asthma.

It strengthens the liver and is useful in case of loss of appetite, acidity, diabetes and other stomach related problems. It makes the backbone flexible and healthy. Method: Lie down on your stomach; keep the palms on the ground on both sides of the chest. The elbows should be lifted upwards and the shoulders should be close to the chest.

Lie flat on the abdomen in prone position.

1. Lie on your belly, while your head rests on your lower arms.
2. Raise your forehead, look upwards and stretch your hands backwards. Let your weight rest on your chest.
3. The head falls a little backwards towards your back and the backward movement proceeds from the neck and the chin. Move your belly further backward as if someone is pulling your arms. The weight is more and more shifted towards the belly and the lower back does the real work.
4. If you cannot raise your chest any further, put your hands and arms next to your chest on the mat without losing the bend. Stretch your arms so that they stand perpendicular on the floor and at the same time turn your arms a little inward. Relax your lower back and bear your weight with your arms.
5. The buttock muscles remain relaxed during the exercise. Move your chest further upwards with every breathing out. Do this in a relaxed way instead of

using force. You can tilt your head back. The shoulders are broad in front and the shoulder blades remain low.

Caution:

Do not practice this asana in case of hernia.

PRANAYAM

Regular practice of pranayam along with asana is helpful for all round development and improving the memory power.

Bhastrika, kapalbhati and Brahmari Pranayam are the best. They improve the memory power and cures forgetfulness.

Human have a brain, which has gigantic power and capacity. This small brain can contain numerous gigabytes and terabytes of computer elements. We hardly make use of one or two percent of the same. If we can properly and by heart understand the limitless capability and control contained in our head, we can with the least effort tap great source of power.

