

# Yoga and Sleep: Your Pathway to Restful Nights (HI)

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Do you often find yourself tossing and turning in bed when trying to get a good night's sleep? You're not alone. Sleep has become an invaluable asset in today's hectic world, and many of us are not getting enough of it. **(Normal Text)**

It has become quite challenging to relax and get a good night's sleep when we take stress and become anxious due to the responsibilities of the job, family, and daily life. But fret not. Here comes yoga, an age-old practice that provides a way to peaceful nights and sound sleep. **(Normal Text)**

In this article, we'll look into the connection between yoga and sleep, discussing how this ancient practice can provide you with the good night's sleep you've been craving for. **(Normal Text)**

## **Understanding The Struggle With Sleep (H2)**

Let's take a minute to figure out why so many of us have trouble falling asleep in the first place before we get into the benefits of yoga for sleep. The National Sleep Foundation [recommends](#) 9 hours of sleep for young adults and adults and 7-8 hours of sleep for older adults. However, stress, unhealthy lifestyle choices, and the use of gadgets right before bed can seriously impact our sleep cycle. **(Normal Text)**

A well-known sleep specialist, \*Dr Sarah Andrews, explains that "modern lifestyle often disturbs our natural circadian rhythm. The blue light emitted by displays like those on phones and laptops can hamper the production of melatonin, a hormone that promotes sleep." This can make it difficult to fall asleep and stay awake throughout the night. **(Normal Text)**

## **How Can Yoga Help You Get A Better Night's Sleep? (H2)**

Yoga, an age-old practice that originated in India thousands of years ago is well-known for its mental, physical and spiritual benefits. It is popular among individuals who want to become more flexible and relieve stress. Its benefit for sleep is a hidden gem that is gaining popularity among practitioners and researchers. **(Normal Text)**

### **1. Stress Reduction and Relaxation (H3)**

One of the primary ways yoga helps with better sleep is by reducing stress. Yoga poses often involve relaxed breathing exercises, moderate stretching, and mindfulness practises. According to a [study](#), older persons who regularly practised yoga had improved overall sleep quality, fewer episodes of disrupted sleep, took less time to fall asleep, and used fewer sleep medications.

Yoga activates the parasympathetic nervous system, often known as the "rest and digest" mode, according to \*Dr Emily Collins, a qualified yoga instructor, who emphasises the importance of relaxation for sleep. Yoga can help you attain calmness that lasts even after you get off the mat. **(Normal Text)**

### **2. Enhancing Mindfulness**

A key aspect of yoga is mindfulness, which is being totally present at the moment without judgement. This mental exercise can have a favourable effect on sleep by relaxing the mind and curbing the rushing thoughts that often keep us up at night. A [study](#) revealed that elderly people who received mindfulness-based therapy for insomnia (MBTI) fell asleep more easily at night and spent less time lying awake at night.

A mindfulness specialist named \*Dr John Davis states that practising mindfulness trains our thoughts to stay in the present rather than focusing on the past or worrying about the future. This change in perspective can break the cycle of negative thoughts that cause insomnia.

### **3. Physical Comfort and Relaxation**

Some yoga poses help to promote relaxation and release physical stress. Poses such as Legs Up the Wall, Forward Fold and Child's Pose can help to release built-up tension from the muscles before bedtime. These poses also promote deep breathing, which can lower heart rate and invoke the body's relaxation response.

\*Dr Rachel Hernandez, a chiropractor who enjoys practising yoga, claims that yoga can help people sleep better since it gently stretches their muscles and increases blood flow. You can convince your body to wind down by including the above-mentioned poses in your nighttime regimen.

### **4. Regulation of the Nervous System**

The nervous system controls the regulation of sleep. The sympathetic nervous system, which is in charge of the "fight or flight" response, becomes hyperactive due to stress and anxiety. This makes it difficult to go from a state of alertness to one of relaxation. Yoga helps to balance the nervous system by activating the parasympathetic nervous system, which boosts relaxation and a sense of calmness.

"Yoga is a powerful tool to regulate the nervous system which harmonizes breath, movement, and mindfulness. The body's inherent ability to restore balance gets activated when we start practising yoga on a daily basis. This calms down the sympathetic and enhances the parasympathetic state, resulting in a better sense of overall well-being, says \*Dr Amanda Patel, Neurology and Mind-Body Medicine Specialist.

## **Some Yoga Poses That Help to Improve Sleep (H2)**

## 1. Child's Pose (Balasana) (H3)



### (Normal Text)

- Kneel down on the yoga mat. Sit back on your heels. Keep your arms at your sides.
- Lean forward slowly so that your stomach touches your thighs. Try to keep your buttocks on your heels.
- Bring your hands out in front of you and put your palms down. Rest them on the mat.
- Relax your neck. Let your forehead gently rest on the mat.
- Let every part of your body relax. Close your eyes and breathe. Hold this pose for as long as you want.
- Slowly get back to the seated position.

## 2. Legs Up the Wall (Viparita Karani)



- Place your yoga mat next to the wall.
- Lie down on the mat. Scoot up your buttocks towards the wall.

- Move your tailbone towards the wall to adjust your position.
- Rest the back of your legs against the wall. Relax your knees. Keep your feet parallel to the floor below. Your legs should feel a little stretched but that shouldn't be painful.
- Rest your arms by your sides.
- Take deep breaths and relax.
- Stay in this pose for as long as you want.
- When done, fold your knees and roll to your side. Move slowly into a seated position and sit quietly for some time.

### **3. Corpse Pose (Savasana)**



- Lie down on your back and let your arms and legs spread open.
- Close your eyes and breathe slowly and deeply.
- Relax your body completely and focus on your mind.
- Concentrate on each part of your body to find any tension, tightness and contracted muscles. Release and relax those areas if you find any.
- Stay in this position for 5 to 10 minutes and then release.

### **4. Forward Fold (Uttanasana)**



- Bend your knees. Bring your palms flat to the floor. Press your head against the knees.
- Feel the stretch on your spine as you inhale. Straighten your legs to stretch the back of your legs.
- Take 6-8 deep breaths in this position.
- To release, bring your hands onto your hips and slowly rise.

## **5. Reclining Bound Angle Pose (Supta Baddha Konasana)**



- Lie down on your back. Bend your knees and bring your ankles towards each other.
- Rest your arms by your side.
- Close your eyes and focus on your breath.
- Stay in this position for 3-5 minutes.
- To release, bring your knees together, roll over to any side, and get up with the help of your hands to a seated position.

## Developing Your Yoga Practice for Better Sleep (H2)

Here are some ideas to get you started if you're all set to start your yoga journey towards better sleep: **(Normal Text)**

### 1. Consistency is The Key: (H3)

Start practising yoga on a regular basis, even if it's a few times a week or daily. This will help you get the long-term benefits if you're consistent. **(Normal Text)**

### 2. Evening Routine:

Consider incorporating yoga into your evening routine as it can help you transition from the hustle of the day to the calmness of the night.

### 3. Gentle and Restorative:

Go for gentle and restorative yoga poses, especially if you're close to bedtime. Avoid any difficult poses as you might feel energised instead of relaxed.

### 4. Mindfulness Meditation:

Keep aside a few minutes each day to practise mindfulness meditation. This can help to calm your mind and prepare you for a good night's sleep.

### 5. Create a Relaxing Environment:

While practising yoga at night, create a relaxing environment by using soothing aromas, dimming the lights and playing calming music. This will set the mood for sleep.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (H3)

### 1. How long should you practice yoga? (H4)

The duration of your yoga practice will differ according to your personal goals, fitness level, and schedule. Normally, a beginner can start with a daily practice of 15-30 minutes. You can increase it to 45-60 minutes when you become more comfortable and experienced. Pay attention to your body and find a balance that works for you. Remember, consistency is key to getting the benefits of yoga. **(Normal Text)**

## 2. How soon after starting yoga will I see results?

The duration of time it takes to see the results from yoga is highly dependent on your unique body type, frequency of practice, and the specific goals you have in mind. Some people notice an increase in strength and muscle development, with a regular practice of at least 3 times per week for a minimum of 30 minutes. It can take a bit longer if you have messed up with your diet or are new to physical exercise.

## 3. When shouldn't you do yoga?

Avoid doing yoga if you have recent injuries, severe pain, or any other medical condition that can get worse with certain poses. Pregnant women should modify positions or seek advice from a prenatal yoga teacher. It is advisable to speak with a healthcare provider before practising if you're recovering from surgery, have excessively high blood pressure, or are in the early stages of certain diseases.

## Conclusion (H3)

In a world where sleepless nights have become a part of life, the age-old practice of yoga offers a ray of hope. The way it focuses on rest and relaxation, physical comfort, mindfulness, and regulation of the nervous system perfectly matches all that's required for a good night's sleep. **(Normal Text)**

As you roll out your mat and start practising yoga, remember that you are taking a positive step towards the betterment of your sleep and overall well-being. So, stretch, breathe, and embrace the calmness that yoga can bring into your life – one peaceful night at a time. **(Normal Text)**

Incorporating yoga into your schedule can not only help you sleep better but also live a healthier and more balanced life. So why not unroll your mat and embark on this journey? Your path to restful nights starts here, with the ancient wisdom of yoga guiding you every step of the way. Sweet dreams! **(Normal Text)**

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**\*These are fictional characters. Quotes from real individuals will be shared during actual work.**



