

SAHAJA YOGA

TURYA COURSE

SESSION FOUR

The physical body and our Yoga

The human body is a miracle of biological engineering. With around 100 billion neurons in the brain, 40 million olfactory receptor cells to help us smell and around 130 million retinal receptor cell rods to let us see, this delicate but incredibly complex shell is much more than simply a bundle of skin and bone.

It is only relatively recently, however, that scientists and doctors have started to concede that there might be a real and definable correlation between the physical side of us and the invisible, but equally important spiritual body. Even in these cases medical opinion has been deliberately vague and inconclusive, despite the growing evidence that there is an important link between the two.

Practitioners of Sahaja Yoga have known for years that there is a connection between the Chakras and physical body, and recent studies have indeed begun to show that the effects of meditation can reach far beyond the spiritual enlightenment and affect every aspect of our lives.

Chakras and the nerve plexuses.

The body's nervous system is the instrument of consciousness, transmitting and translating the information gathered by our senses (hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell) to the brain for processing. Nerves are spread around the body, but also form clusters known as plexuses. The Chakras correlate to the nervous system as follows:

Mooladhara – Pelvic plexus: Excretory systems, genitals etc.

Swadhistan – Aortic plexus: Lower abdomen, kidneys etc
Nabhi – Solar plexus: Liver, stomach

Heart – Cardiac plexus: Heart, lungs.

Vishuddhi – Cervical plexus: Arms, neck, mouth, etc

Agnya – Optic chiasma: Pineal & pituitary bodies.

Sahasrara – Limbic system

It is interesting to note that the nervous system, which controls the physical flow of signals to and from the brain, appears to have a direct correlation with our Chakras, which in turn affect not only the physical side of us, but also our emotional, mental and spiritual make up.

So we know for example that whilst the stomach gives us our physical sense of satisfaction after a good meal, the Nabhi Chakra provides the ultimate Spiritual satisfaction that comes with Self-Realisation and meditation. In the same way the lack of confidence which can stem from a weak centre Heart Chakra, may well be reflected in palpitations and other physical symptoms.

The effect of meditation on the physical body

The body's nervous system, which is part of an ultra sophisticated control mechanism, is divided into three parts; the Central, Peripheral and Autonomic Nervous Systems. These systems control how we act and perceive our universe through the senses, and the autonomic system also governs the automatic running of our bodies by controlling essential non-conscious tasks such as the rate of our heart beat.

One of the beneficial side effects of a peaceful and thoughtless meditation is that our autonomic system automatically reduces any physical over-activity in our body. Since this system is also the part of us which governs the 'fight or flight' mechanism within us all (which in the modern world can be damagingly over excited through stress) this can prove to be of major benefit to our health. It has been suggested that this is accomplished through the improved energy flows which occur at the Limbic area (i.e. the Sahasrara Chakra at the top of the head) which is linked to the sympathetic nervous system.

In addition Sahaja Yoga practitioners have been found to exhibit higher levels of endorphins than usual, which are known to activate the body's immune system. (See Page 64, Professor U.C.Rai, Medical Science Enlightened, 1993, L.E.T.) This in turn is believed to increase the levels of antibodies which help fight against disease.

The liver and Sahaja Yoga.

The liver performs a huge number of vital bodily functions, including filtering the blood and eliminating toxins. One of the the most important of these tasks is to supply glucose to the brain.

Because so much of the liver's activity is concerned with keeping the body and brain free of harmful toxins and the hormonal flow in balance, most ancient Far Eastern medicinal practices acknowledge the liver as an important part of the functioning of the whole being.

Oscillating mood swings caused by fluctuations in blood sugar levels or hormonal imbalance, the relationship of bile to proper digestion and overall energy levels and the detoxifying function of the liver offer obvious mind-body correlations.

Sahaja Yoga recognises this ancient wisdom and recommends that practitioners focus on keeping the liver cool. The popular Sahaja Yoga Liver Diet is an example of the kind of useful treatment that can be used as a health aid if needed. Ask your centre for details.

Practical uses of Sahaja Yoga for health.

In general Sahaja Yoga meditation is the best way to combat day to day ailments and make ourselves stronger and more resistant to health problems. We cannot become immune to illness, but we can use our meditation to make us hardier and more able to avoid the kind of problems which are the norm in today's hectic, stressful lifestyle.

There are also a number of additional steps we can take to help keep ourselves healthy and look after our Chakras and subtle system. These techniques complement the meditation, and below are a few examples of suggested treatments.

* Breathlessness and panic attacks.

Often these kind of attacks can be caused by a catch in the Heart Chakra. We can work on this centre during our meditations and also breathe slowly and deeply in and out for a while with our right hand placed over the heart area.

* Neck pain.

This can be caused by an obstruction on the Vishuddhi Chakra. In this case we can place our hand over the painful area during meditation and either reaffirm 'Mother I am not guilty' 16 times, or try to massage the area with oil. We can also help this Chakra by talking sweetly and avoiding arguments wherever possible.

* Headaches.

Caused often by excessive activity at the level of the Ego. To help soothe away the pain we can look at a candle flame during our meditation, or hold our right palm over the forehead and say to ourselves 'Mother, I forgive everyone'. We can also gently massage Sandalwood Oil into the front Agnya with the fingers. If the pain is at the back of the head, we can stroke from the left temple back and downwards across the back of the head with the right hand to bring down the inflated Super-Ego and so help soothe the pain.

* Sore Eyes

To help your eyes, take time out to look at the sky or parts of nature such as trees or green grass. This is a very effective counter for too much reading or other close quarter work.

* Throat.

Try to protect the throat against extreme cold, dust or even too much talking. Where possible use a scarf. Chewing raw liquorice or eating honey can also help with problems here.

* Insomnia.

This is a problem of an over active right side channel. For this we need to balance ourselves in the meditation so as to cool down the right side. A cool water and salt footsoak is also recommended during the evening meditation.

* Hot Liver.

This is also caused by an over exerted right side. One of the symptoms is a fragmented Attention, so that we find it hard to meditate and we become restless and ill at ease. We can

use the ice pack to cool down the liver area directly, and try and avoid eating heating things like fried foods for a few days.

Sahaja Yoga and the treatment of more serious ailments.

There are a number of medical studies underway which are researching the potential for combatting more serious ailments using Sahaja Yoga meditation techniques.

So far the research is in its early stages, although Dr Ramesh Manocha of the Natural Therapies Unit at the Royal Hospital for Women in Sydney, Australia, has recently reported on a pilot study which suggest that this form of meditation may have a beneficial role to play in the treatment of menopausal hot flushes, severe migraine and psychological stress.

According to Dr Manocha, the meditation may reduce the release of catecholamines and other stress hormones and increase beneficial parasympathetic activity. Dr Manocha is currently investigating the benefits of using meditation to alleviate the symptoms of chronic asthma, with very positive early results.

Other studies conducted in India also suggest that Sahaja Yoga can be beneficial in treating epilepsy and hypertension whilst work recently completed in the UK by clinical psychologist Dr Adam Morgan, has demonstrated that significant benefits can arise from the use of Sahaja Yoga meditation to treat patients suffering from anxiety and depression.

These international studies are just part of a worldwide initiative to identify and demonstrate the powerful physical benefits of practicing this ancient form of meditation. Whilst it is still too early to talk confidently in terms of 'breakthrough' treatment, these results are beginning to draw the attention of the international medical community to the very real benefits of this form of meditation.

As further proof of this growing interest several influential bodies such as the National Institutes of Health in the US have started to conduct official Sahaja Yoga programmes as part of their evaluation of holistic healthcare and meditation.

In addition several doctors who themselves practice Sahaja Yoga are continuing to research the subject, with a number having already gained their degree qualifications by submitting theses on the topic of Sahaja Yoga meditation and medicinal treatment.

Nabhi Chakra

Deity: Shri Vishnu (Shri Lakshmi)/Shri Shesha
Physical counterpart: Solar Plexus
Looks after: Stomach, intestines, spleen, pancreas, liver.
Qualities: Satisfaction, domestic well-being, peace, generosity, Attention.
No of Petals: Ten (10)
Day: Thursday **Colour:** Green **Element:** Water
Gem: Emerald **Symbol:** Yin/Yang

The evolutionary growth of humankind mirrors the ascending Chakras of our subtle system, and our corresponding Spiritual growth path. The Nabhi Chakra represents the evolutionary point when man's shelter became 'home'; when the family unit became a source of satisfaction in itself rather than just a channel for reproduction. This domestic satisfaction translates into the satisfaction that we feel with life in general after our Spiritual awakening through Self-Realisation. Once we achieve this state of well-being, we can move on to search for more enlightening and spiritual truths.

Quality

Satisfaction is a key word for the Nabhi Chakra. Some 'hot livered' people are naturally irritable. For them life without worry is an impossibility and they will express their discontent at the slightest excuse. When our Spirit manifests we can put things into their true perspective, and worry becomes an unusual occurrence. Only in the peace of thoughtlessness can we be content. We realise that the Spirit is not concerned with passing trends and fashions, a button missing here or there. The affirmation for the Nabhi Chakra is 'In my Spirit I am satisfied'.

The Nabhi is the centre of welfare, both physical and financial. Prosperity is a necessary step in evolution, and money is a valid medium of exchange in order to obtain the essential needs and desires of man. However, sometimes we get lost and our desire for basic needs turns into a cycle of insatiable desire for things in general - the start of a materialist existence.

After our Realisation we understand that while there is no harm in being wealthy, we do not need to focus all of our attention on the pursuit of money. That money is simply a commodity which should flow responsibly into and out of our possession like food and water. In this way we lose our selfishness and learn generosity, the key to an open heart.

Another key aspect of this Chakra is the elevating power of the balanced household. The respect which exists between family members is the foundation on which modern civilisation has been built, and from this relationship comes the decency and generosity by which humankind is judged. After our Realisation we begin to understand more about the place of the family in our life, and in turn develop a more positive attitude in all of our relationships. We learn that marriage and relationships offer much more than just material stability, and in fact can provide a spiritual component which adds profound peace to our lives.

Mythology

The presiding deity (or role model) of the centre is Shri Vishnu, the Preserver. He it is who sustains our Dharma and leads us in our evolution. The power of the Nabhi Chakra rests with Shri Lakshmi, from whom we obtain our physical and material well-being (Kshema). She it is also who is the source of the peace which we get from our Spiritual awakening and through our meditation.

Gross Physical Aspect

This centre governs the workings of the stomach area. If the functioning of the stomach becomes disturbed, then the process of digestion and assimilation of food is affected and we will fail to receive proper nourishment. It is important, therefore that we eat balanced meals with proper respect for the process. The Nabhi Chakra is also responsible for the liver, and the importance of this organ for our meditation and Attention cannot be stressed too much. It is very important to take particular care of the liver (which is prone to overheating through improper diet or stimulants) and to ensure that we do not exhaust it too much through our thinking and planning.

Causes of problems with the Nabhi Chakra

Left side: Excessive worrying about household affairs.
Right side: Excessive gluttony or foodism, drug and alcohol abuse, fanaticism of any kind, money problems.

Looking after the Nabhi Chakra

A weak Nabhi may be indicated by – excessive worrying, fanaticism or asceticism, stomach problems.

To help clear any problems of the Chakra we can:

A. Use the elements

Footsoaking

Candle treatment of the stomach area

Place an ice pack on liver area.

B. Affirmations:

Mother please make me a generous person
Mother, in my Spirit I am satisfied.

General Advice:

Try not to complain too much about your life

Avoid fatty foods and excessive dairy products if you suffer from problems with the right Nabhi.

Eat a nourishing and balanced diet, including fresh fruit and vegetables.

Avoid miserliness and try to be satisfied with what you have.

Watch/witness any anger that arises in you and become detached from the cause and effect.

Use the liver diet as necessary.

Moderate your intake of stimulants including coffee and alcohol.