WELLNESS YOGA INSTITUTE

Yoga for Diabetes Management

A Practical Guide to Selected Yoga Asanas

Educational resource for safe, supportive yoga practice

Important: Yoga may support general health and well-being, but no single yoga posture is a proven cure for diabetes. This guide does not replace medical care, prescribed medication, glucose monitoring or advice from a qualified healthcare professional.

About This Guide

This guide describes selected yoga postures that may be included, when appropriate, in a broader lifestyle programme for people living with diabetes. Suitability depends on each person's health, mobility, experience and diabetes-related complications.

Safety Before Practice

• Consult your healthcare professional before beginning a new yoga or exercise programme, especially if you use insulin or medicines that can cause hypoglycaemia.

• If you are at risk of low blood glucose, follow your clinician's advice about glucose checks and carrying fast-acting glucose.

• Do not force stretches, practise through pain or hold your breath.

• People with diabetic retinopathy, neuropathy, foot ulcers, cardiovascular disease, uncontrolled blood pressure, significant joint or spinal problems may need modifications or should avoid certain postures.

• Stop if you experience chest pain, unusual breathlessness, dizziness, visual symptoms, numbness or pain.

• Never change or stop diabetes medication because of yoga practice.

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9.1 Pawanmuktasana (Wind-Relieving Pose)

Introduction

Lie on your back with legs extended. Bend one knee and bring it gently towards the chest. Hold the shin without pressing hard. Breathe normally, release and repeat on the other side. If comfortable, bring both knees towards the chest.

Duration and Repetition

Start with 1–2 repetitions per side and 1–2 double-knee repetitions; hold 10–15 seconds only if comfortable.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May support gentle hip and lower-back mobility and body awareness. It is a gentle preparatory practice, not a proven glucose-lowering treatment.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid forceful pressure. Seek advice with hernia, painful abdominal conditions, recent abdominal surgery, significant knee/hip problems or pregnancy.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.2 Ardha Matsyendrasana (Half Spinal Twist)

Introduction

Sit with legs extended. Bend the right knee and place the right foot outside the left knee. Keep the left leg extended or bend it only if comfortable. Place the right hand behind you and bring the left arm across the knee. Lengthen the spine on inhalation and rotate gently on exhalation. Repeat on the other side.

Duration and Repetition

Beginners: 10–15 seconds per side, once or twice, without forcing the twist.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May support spinal mobility, postural awareness and gentle trunk-muscle engagement. Listed in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes yoga programme; that does not prove an independent effect on blood glucose.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid deep twisting. Seek advice for acute back pain, spinal disorders, recent spinal surgery or significant knee/hip limitations.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.3 Janu Sirsasana (Head-to-Knee Forward Bend)

Introduction

Sit with legs extended. Bend one knee and place the foot near the inner thigh of the opposite leg. Inhale and lengthen the spine. Exhale and hinge gently from the hips towards the extended leg. Reach to the shin, ankle or foot without pulling. Change sides.

Duration and Repetition

Begin with 10–15 seconds on each side, once per side. Use a strap if needed.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May improve hamstring and hip flexibility and encourage mindful breathing. It is included here as general flexibility practice, not as a proven diabetes treatment.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid forcing the head towards the knee. Modify for acute back pain, disc problems or hamstring injury.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.4 Mandukasana (Frog Pose)

Introduction

Sit in Vajrasana if the knees and ankles tolerate it. Make gentle fists and place them beside the navel without pressing hard. Inhale to lengthen the spine. Exhale and hinge forward gently from the hips. Hold briefly with normal breathing, then return upright.

Duration and Repetition

Start with 1–2 repetitions and a 5–10 second comfortable hold. Do not compress the abdomen.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

Included in some Indian yoga education resources for diabetes. May support gentle movement and body awareness; evidence does not establish that it alone improves insulin production or glucose control.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid if Vajrasana causes pain. Seek medical advice with peptic ulcer, hernia, painful abdominal conditions or recent abdominal surgery. Do not press fists forcefully.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.5 Paschimottanasana (Seated Forward Bend)

Introduction

Sit with both legs extended. Inhale and lengthen the spine. Exhale and hinge forward from the hips, reaching towards the shins, ankles or feet. Keep knees slightly bent if hamstrings are tight. Return slowly.

Duration and Repetition

Begin with 10–15 seconds, once or twice, without pulling or forcing.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May improve hamstring flexibility and hip mobility. Included in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes programme. Studies of multi-component yoga programmes cannot establish the independent effect of this posture.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid deep forward bending with acute back pain or spinal injury. Modify for hamstring injury. Seek individual clinical advice for diabetic retinopathy or uncontrolled blood pressure.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.6 Shalabhasana (Locust Pose)

Introduction

Lie on your abdomen. For the partial version, gently lift one straight leg a small distance while keeping the pelvis stable; lower and change sides. Attempt the full version with both legs only if appropriate and without straining the lower back. Rest afterwards.

Duration and Repetition

Start with 1–2 small lifts per side, holding 3–5 seconds. Full variation requires adequate strength and supervision.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May strengthen back and hip muscles. Listed in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes chapter and progressive course; it is not proven to independently control glucose.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid with acute back pain or spinal injury. Seek advice after abdominal surgery or with hernia, pregnancy or significant hip/knee problems.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.7 Dhanurasana (Bow Pose)

Introduction

Lie on your abdomen. Bend both knees and hold the ankles if possible. Keep knees about hip-width apart. Inhale and gently lift the chest and thighs only as far as comfortable. Avoid pulling forcefully. Breathe normally, lower slowly and rest.

Duration and Repetition

This is not suitable for every beginner. If appropriate, begin with one brief 3–5 second hold under qualified guidance.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May strengthen back muscles and stretch the front of the body. Included in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes programme; inclusion does not prove an independent glucose-lowering effect.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid during pregnancy, acute back injury, hernia, painful abdominal conditions or recovery from abdominal surgery. Use caution with knee, hip or shoulder problems.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.8 Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose)

Introduction

Lie on your abdomen. Place palms beside the chest and keep elbows close. Inhale and gently raise the head and chest using the back muscles. Keep the pelvis supported. Do not force the arms straight or compress the neck. Exhale and lower slowly.

Duration and Repetition

Begin with 2–3 low Cobra repetitions, holding 5–10 seconds if comfortable.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May improve spinal mobility and strengthen back muscles. Included in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes yoga practices; it is not established as an independent glucose-control method.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid during pregnancy and with acute back injury. Seek advice after abdominal surgery or with hernia or significant wrist/shoulder problems.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.9 Trikonasana (Triangle Pose)

Introduction

Stand with feet comfortably wide. Turn the right foot outward. Extend arms to shoulder height. Reach the right hand towards the shin, ankle or a block while extending the left arm upward. Keep the chest open without collapsing. Return to standing and repeat on the other side.

Duration and Repetition

Hold 10–15 seconds per side, once or twice. Use a wall or block for balance.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May support balance, hip mobility and leg strength. Listed in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes programme; this does not show that it alone lowers glucose.

Precautions and Contraindications

Modify for balance limitations, neuropathy, foot ulcers, hip/knee or spinal problems. Use appropriate foot protection and professional guidance.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.10 Matsyasana (Fish Pose)

Introduction

For a supported version, lie on your back with a folded blanket or bolster under the upper back. Let the chest open gently while keeping the head and neck supported. Do not force the crown of the head into the floor. Breathe normally and come out slowly.

Duration and Repetition

Use a brief comfortable hold, around 10–20 seconds, with an instructor if new to the posture.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

May gently open the chest and support upper-back mobility. Included in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes yoga list; not proven to treat diabetes or change pancreatic function.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid unsupported neck extension with cervical problems, neck pain or recent neck injury. Do not place body weight on the head.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

9.11 Sarvangasana (Shoulder Stand) — Supervised Practice

Introduction

This is an advanced inverted posture. It should only be taught in person by a suitably qualified yoga professional after individual health screening. Do not attempt it by following written instructions alone. Never turn the head while inverted. Exit immediately if neck pain, headache, visual symptoms or dizziness occur.

Duration and Repetition

No general holding time is prescribed. Suitability and duration require individual assessment and direct supervision.

Potential Benefits and Diabetes Relevance

Listed in Dr. Vishwas Mandlik's diabetes yoga chapter. Its inclusion in a traditional programme does not establish that it independently lowers blood glucose or increases insulin production.

Precautions and Contraindications

Avoid unless specifically cleared and supervised with diabetic retinopathy or other retinal disease, glaucoma, uncontrolled hypertension, cardiovascular disease, neck disorders, osteoporosis or stroke history. It is not a routine beginner exercise.

Safety note: Yoga is a complementary lifestyle practice. Continue prescribed medication, glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition and regular medical follow-up.

Conclusion

Yoga can be a supportive lifestyle practice for people living with diabetes. A structured, individually adapted programme may help with physical activity, flexibility, balance, relaxation and general well-being. The selection of postures should depend on medical history, mobility, diabetes-related complications and professional assessment.

Yoga does not replace prescribed diabetes medication, blood glucose monitoring, balanced nutrition or regular medical care.

Source Note

Diabetes-asana references are drawn in part from Dr. Vishwas Mandlik, *Yoga Therapy – A Practical Guide for the Twenty-first Century*, Chapter 11, especially pages 51 and 54–58. Janu Sirsasana and certain modifications are included as general yoga education content and are not attributed to that chapter. Descriptions, suggested beginner timings and safety notes are educational adaptations, not individual medical advice.

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