

# International Day of Yoga 2021: Essential Yoga practices to strengthen lungs

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People are taking up Yoga to fight their isolation and depression in the lockdown period.  
(Photo source: IE)

***By Dr Partap Chauhan,***

**International Day of Yoga 2021:** Yoga is India's gift to the world. It is practised by people from all walks of life and is the most trusted way to keep one's health in check. The COVID-19 pandemic is not just impacting the physical state but has lasting impacts on mental health as well. People are taking up Yoga to fight their isolation and depression in the lockdown period.

## **When is International Yoga Day celebrated?**

Every year, June 21 is celebrated as the International Day of Yoga and this year it has a special significance as the world is fighting with the pandemic. Yoga has the power to promote good health – the balance of the body, mind and soul together and helps in leading a healthier lifestyle.

## **International Yoga Day: Significance of Pranayama**

The integrative medical fraternity has stressed the importance of Pranayamas (breathing practices) and how they are quintessential in times of pandemic, especially when the COVID is impacting the lungs.

**Some of the Yoga practices that could help strengthen our lungs are:**

**Nadi Shodhana pranayama:** The practice of Nadi Shodhana helps in increasing the awareness of and sensitivity to the breath in the nostrils. The minor blockages are removed and the flow of breath in both nostrils becomes more balanced. The long, slow and balanced breathing has profound effects, calming and balancing the energies.

**Bhujangasana:** The cobra pose helps one in increasing mental calmness and strengthens the mind. With the regular practice it could help soothe sciatica, strengthen the spine and can also provide relief from asthmatic symptoms.

**Balāsana:** The child's pose, or balasana, has a direct effect on the neurological and lymphatic systems, reducing tension and exhaustion by keeping the mind peaceful and tranquil.

**Setubandasana:** Also, known as the bridge position, can help with sleeplessness, anxiety, and migraines. It is also effective for lowering blood pressure and preventing backaches.

Regular practice of these asanas improves our breathing habits and increases our intake of oxygen. Along with increasing our lung capacity, these asanas also help in improving our overall health. As far as improvement in our overall lung function is concerned, correct practicing of these techniques lengthen the inhalation and exhalation process, strengthen the lung muscles and treat the different kinds of respiratory disorders.

All these asanas are best done under the supervision of a trained Yoga Acharya, so as to ensure that the right technique is being followed.

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