



Vyagrasana (The Tiger Stretch Pose)

Many yoga poses take inspiration from the observing the way animals move and stretch especially when getting up from a nap. **Vyagrasana** is a natural yogic pose to follow Marjariasana (cat stretch pose). In warming up and creating flow of energy in the body - it is important to flex the spine as it is the switchboard for the nervous system. **Tiger stretch** massages the lower organs of the body associated with your digestion, elimination and reproduction systems. The movement will release Vata in the stomach, pancreas, liver, as well as the small and large intestines. It can relieve sciatic pain done carefully and in addition creates muscle tone in the thighs and buttocks.

Guidance: Table top is the base position for both **Marjariasana** and **Vyagrasana**. Start in Table Top coming onto your hands and knees where the palms are flat with hands under the shoulders and knees directly below the hips. Start by relaxing in this pose by taking 10 long deep breaths. Then exhale all the air out as you bend your right knee and bring it to your forehead pressing the thigh towards the chest. Slowly inhale and swing the right leg back as you arch lifting the head up and pointing the toe towards the back of the head. This is one round. Then exhale slowly and draw the knee towards the forehead again repeating the movement. Do ten rounds on each side. The awareness is on the breath and fluidity of movement.

In India, the Tiger is considered to the King of the jungle – a national symbol of power, strength, grace and agility. On an outer level, the tiger gives us strength, courage and fortitude to overcome obstacles and to be fearless. Those qualities are inherent in asana itself and with intention we can experience those as part of ourselves in the way we move. The tiger along with the lion is also associated as the vehicle of Durga who can be called upon to propitiate Rahu. Chant the mantra of Durga (Om Dum Durgaiye Namaha) as you do the asana and then the practice becomes an offering while in the roller coaster ride of a Rahu dasa, bhukti or transit.

Sraddhasagar

