

Feel Good Yoga for Body, Mind and Soul

BK Shubhada Neel, Sonal Richharia, Pushpa Pandey, Sunita Lodaya

■ INTRODUCTION

In this electronic age, where on one hand we have made great materialistic developments, on the other hand in this electronic age, undue stress during pregnancy is likely to affect the physical fitness of mother, the physical and mental development of the baby as well as the process of delivery. Yoga has an answer to address these issues as it works on the mind, body, and soul.

To have healthy body, we need a peaceful mind and enlightened soul, union between the body, mind, and soul offers a positive balanced life. In antenatal period to have healthy and intelligent baby, it is required to empower expectant mothers with good thoughts and have flexible body for easy and safe delivery. So yoga improves functional capacity of mother's body and mind.

Yoga achieves union between the body, mind, and soul and offers a positive, balanced lifestyle. It enhances the physical and mental health of the pregnant women. Yoga can be practiced in all the stages of pregnancy.

It has three basic principles:

1. *Asanas:* It increases mother's flexibility, stretchability, muscle tone, and joint flexibility.
2. *Pranayama and Om chanting:*
 - i. It will regulate mother's breathing
 - ii. Maintain emotional balance
 - iii. Ensure proper oxygen supply to the breathing fetus during labor and delivery.
3. *Rajyoga meditation:*
 - i. Connects the self to supreme
 - ii. Helps mother to relax and calm down mind and body.

Yogic practices will improve the functional capacity of mother's body and mind and will heighten the neuron-muscular coordination which will help in natural delivery process.

Physical and mental, stresses are very often the main causes of difficult and obstructed delivery. Expectant mother has to be physically, mentally, and emotionally

empowered and healthy. So that baby will be physically, mentally, and emotionally empowered and healthy. This can be easily managed by undertaking certain regular yogic practices like asanas, pranayama and meditation especially under supervision of yoga expert, so as to avoid any harm to the expectant mother or the growing baby in the uterus. With the yogic practice, expectant mother approaches with confidence the ordeal of delivery process with relaxed frame of body and mind.

This presentation on the subject is very crucial for all expectant mothers and I am sure this information will serve as a guideline for both expectant mothers as well as the antenatal healthcare providers. Feel good yoga and meditation for mother and baby will become popular and acceptable soon.

Come One! Come All!

Come and learn how to keep yourself fit and fine.

Enjoy and experience yogāsanas, pranayama, and meditation, something unique which you have been missing!

■ WHAT IS YOGA?

The word "Yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root "yuj" meaning "to join", "to connect" or "to unite".

Achieve union between the body, mind, and soul to attain self-realization.

Leads to the union of an individual consciousness with the universal consciousness.

It overcomes all kinds of sufferings and leads to holistic health, happiness, and harmony in all walks of life.

■ WHAT IS THE REQUIREMENT OF YOGA IN PREGNANCY?

In ancient India, at the time of our grandmothers, pregnancy and childbearing occurred at very early age so muscle and joint flexibility used to be more, hence vaginal delivery was easy. Secondly they used to do all household works like cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, which

automatically strengthened their thigh and calf muscle. In today's scenario, marriages occur late and due to carrier constrain one plans baby late, so joints are stiffer. One enjoy pleasure of machines and maids so no household activities, that's why to improve on flexibility, it is required to do yoga and asanas during pregnancy.

For Mental Development and Sanskar

Highly intelligent child is aim of all parents nowadays, but for that what they can do, nobody knows. 80% of brain and nervous system is developed in intrauterine period, to have spiritually and mentally evolved child it is required that pregnant lady should live in *satvik* environment—means stress-free and happy. By different methods of pranayama, mother can have proper oxygenation which is important for brain development.

OM chanting helps in neuromuscular synapses formation and we know more synapses that mean more intelligence.

■ HOW YOGA CAN HELP DURING ANTENATAL PERIOD?

Medical research has shown marked benefits of yoga to the mother and fetus. Adverse effects of stress in pregnancy are pregnancy-induced hypertension, pregnancy-induced diabetes, abortion, preterm labor, eclampsia, and intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR). Yoga is multi-dimensional, physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, and thus provides total answer to the challenge of stress. Yoga is a technique for total personality development at physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual levels.

The chief aim of these exercises is to improve the overall elasticity and strength of the body's muscles and more importantly those sets, which are vital for delivery like muscles of lower back, waist, lower abdomen, leg, and pelvic floor. The exercises also improve blood circulation. Regularly doing these exercises also prepares you mentally for the process of childbirth as well as dispels misconceived fears and notions.

■ GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR YOGA PRACTICE

Before the Practice

- ✦ Cleanliness of surroundings, body, and mind.
- ✦ Calm and quiet atmosphere with a relaxed body and mind.
- ✦ Empty stomach or light stomach—small amount of honey in lukewarm water if you feel weak.

- ✦ Bladder and bowels should be empty.
- ✦ A mattress, yoga mat, durrie or folded blanket.
- ✦ Light and comfortable cotton clothes.
- ✦ Do not do yoga in a state of exhaustion, illness, in a hurry or in acute stress conditions.
- ✦ Chronic disease/pain/cardiac problems, during pregnancy and menstruation, a physician or a yoga therapist should be consulted.

During the Practice

- ✦ Start with a prayer to create a conducive environment to relax the mind.
- ✦ Slow, in a relaxed manner, with awareness of the body and breath.
- ✦ Do not hold the breath unless instructed. Breathing through the nostrils unless instructed otherwise.
- ✦ Do not hold the body tightly, or jerk the body.
- ✦ Practice with own capacity.
- ✦ Persistent and regular practice.
- ✦ Keep in mind contraindications/limitations.
- ✦ End with meditation/deep silence/Sankalpa Shanti path.

After Practice

- ✦ Bath may be taken only after 20–30 minutes of practice.
- ✦ Food may be consumed only after 20–30 minutes of practice.

Food for Thought

- ✦ A satvik, balanced vegetarian diet recommended.
- ✦ Over 30 years, two meals a day should suffice.
- ✦ As the food, so the mind,
As the mind, so the life.
- ✦ Satvik—full of positive energy (Prepared and consumed in positive state of mind in Godly remembrance)
- ✦ Balanced diet = Proteins + carbohydrates + fats + vitamins + minerals in appropriate quantities.

Daily Sadhana

- ✦ Prayer
- ✦ Stretching exercise
- ✦ Yogāsanas
- ✦ Om chanting
- ✦ Pranayama
- ✦ Rajyoga meditation
- ✦ Sankalpa
- ✦ Shantipath.

Prayer

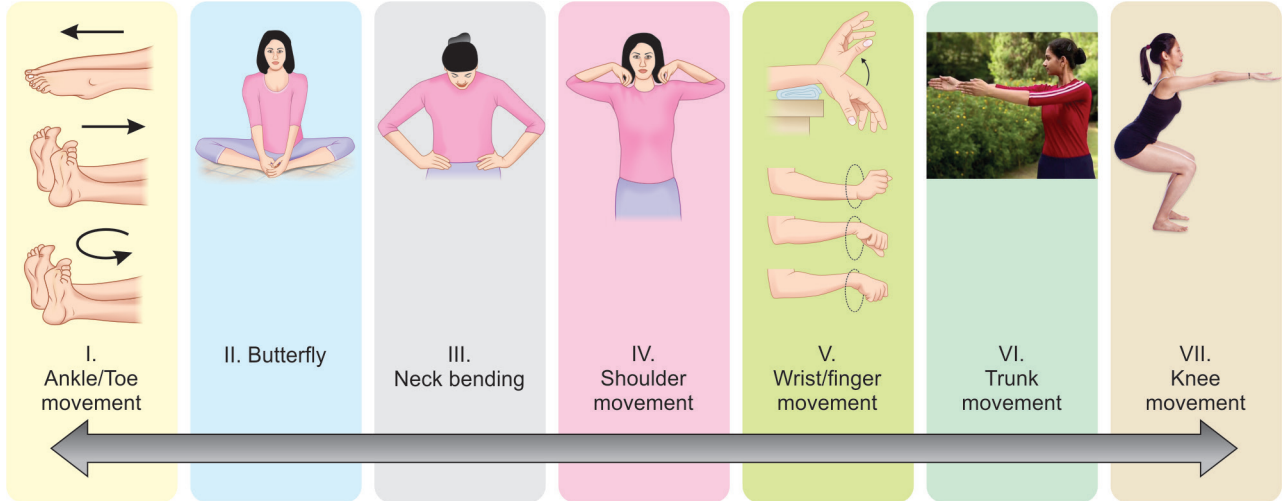


सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
 सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
 सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु
 मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत् ।
 शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

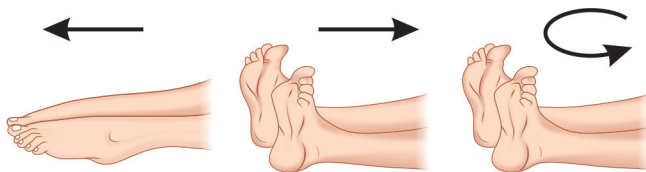
Everybody should be happy, everybody should be healthy. There should be divinity everywhere. Nobody should be in distress.

Loosening Practices

- ✦ Ankle/toe movement
- ✦ Butterfly
- ✦ Neck movement
- ✦ Shoulder movement
- ✦ Wrist/finger movement
- ✦ Knee movement.



Ankle/Toe Movement

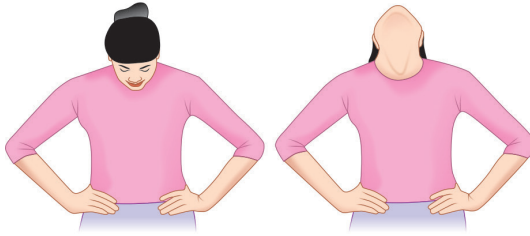


Butterfly

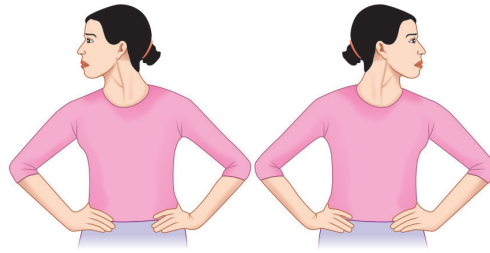


Neck Bending

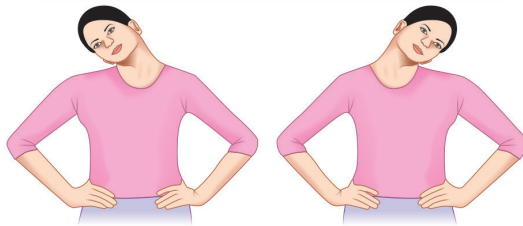
Stage I: Forward and backward bending



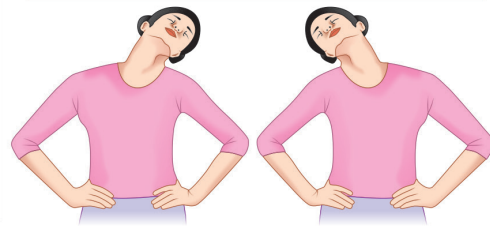
Stage III: Right and left twisting



Stage II: Right and left bending

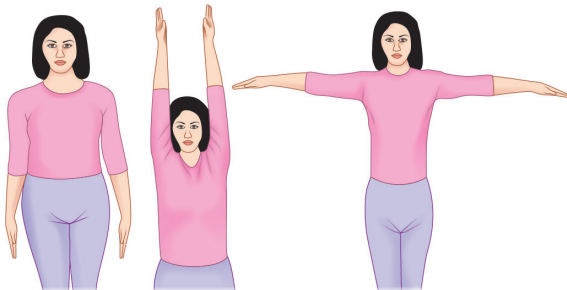


Stage IV: Neck rotation

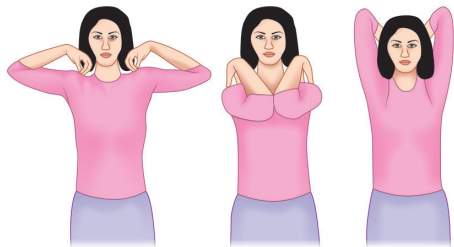


Shoulder's Movement

Stage I: Shoulder stretch



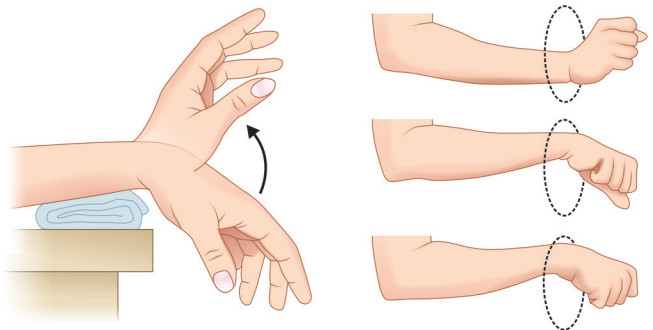
Stage II: Shoulder rotation



Stage III: Shoulder and hand stretch



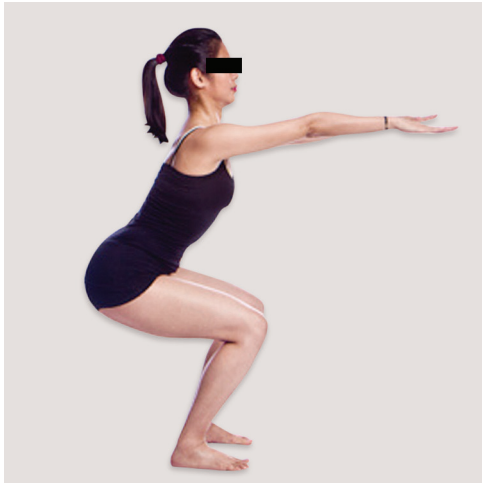
Hand and Wrist Movement



Trunk Movement



Knee Movement



YOGASANAS

Points to Remember

- ✦ Starting position of asana
- ✦ Reach slowly to final position
- ✦ Hold for sometimes in final position
- ✦ Slow release of asana
- ✦ Relax.

Standing Pose



Sitting Pose

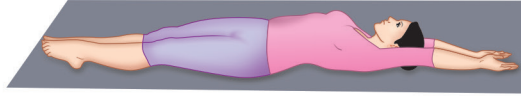
- ✦ Dandasana
- ✦ Bhadrasana (The firm/auspicious pose)
- ✦ Sukhasana
- ✦ Parvatasana (The mountain pose)
- ✦ Sukha Purva
- ✦ Kativakrasana
- ✦ Chakki chalan
- ✦ Upavista Konasana
- ✦ Parsva Uttanasana
- ✦ Janushirasana
- ✦ Matsyendrasana
- ✦ Vajrasana (The thunder bolt pose)



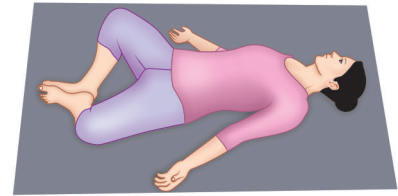
Supine Pose



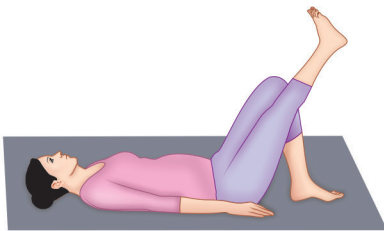
Vipritkarni



Uttana Tadasana
(The palm tree pose
in lying position)



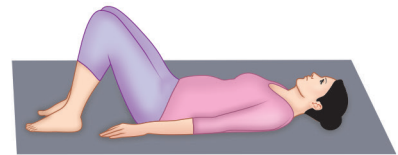
Uttana Bhadrasana
(The thighs-stretch
pose in lying position)



Sulabha Uttana
Ek padasana (Raised leg pose)



Janu Skandhasana
(The knee-shoulder pose)



Kegel's exercise
Tensing relaxing

What is Pranayama?

- ✦ Also known as “yogic breathing” or “controlled deep breathing”.
- ✦ “Prana” means energy in Sanskrit.
- ✦ “Ayama” means distribution of energy.

Pranayama teaches you to breathe well, with an equal balance of nourishing oxygen inhaled and unwanted carbon dioxide exhaled. This keeps your body oxygenated giving you more energy.



Pranakarshan Kriya



Anuloma Viloma/Nadishodhan



Bhamari Pranayama



Udgit Pranayama



Shitli Pranayama

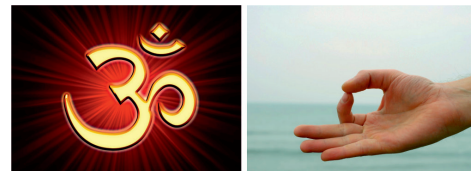


Sitkari Pranayama

Benefits of Pranayama

- ✦ Improves the circulation of blood.
- ✦ Increases the oxygen level in your blood.
- ✦ Helps your body to remove waste effectively; reduces stress.
- ✦ Cope during labor by calming you and distracting you from pain.
- ✦ Breathing deeply now will help to prepare you for giving birth.
- ✦ Your body produces increasing amounts of adrenaline when you are afraid, which can prevent the production of oxytocin, a hormone that helps labor along. Deep breathing in labor can help you fight the urge to panic when you feel the pain of contractions.
- ✦ Keeping your body relaxed means you can save your energy for when it is needed.

Om Mantra



Dhyana mudra

Benefits of Chanting the Powerful Om Mantra

- ✦ Helps reduce stress
- ✦ Improves concentration
- ✦ Sets your mood right
- ✦ Strengthens spinal cord
- ✦ Helps in detoxifying your body
- ✦ Takes care of your heart and digestive system
- ✦ Helps in getting you enough sleep
- ✦ Enables you to have control over your feelings
- ✦ Helps you in getting rid of negativity.

RAJYOGA MEDITATION

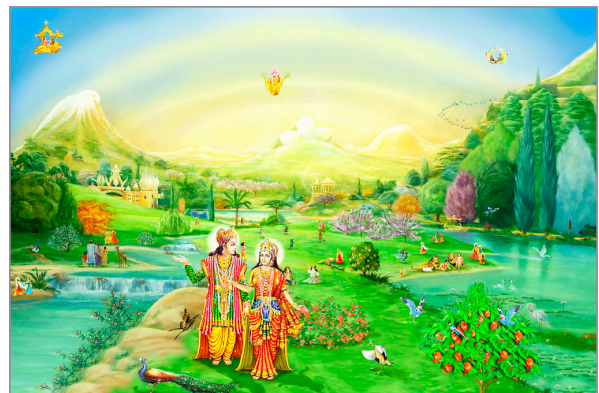


All are welcome in this miraculous journey of life. To make this journey comfortable practice the following commentaries for 10 minutes three times in a day. If possible, early in the morning, at about 4–5 AM. Early morning is the most auspicious time. Also do this before going to bed too. The meaning of Yog is to establish a connection, reunion of self (soul) with Supreme. The practice of remembering/visualizing Supreme, with love, affection, and experiencing every possible relation with *him* is Rajyoga meditation.

COMMENTARY FOR RAJYOGA EXPERIENCE



I am spiritually empowered soul which is different than this body. I am seated between the two eyebrows and shining like a star. This body is like a motor car..... and I am a soul working as its driver. This body is made up of perishable five elements. But I am the imperishable soul ever young and indestructible. I am the master of the house called the “Body”. I am the soul in the form of tiny point of light. I feel more and more powerful as I become light, radiating light. On the screen of my mind, I begin to sense a warm, golden-red glow. My home, I travel far beyond to my home of peace. In my home I am so free, light, and peaceful. I feel the presence of a powerful light. As I come closer and closer to the source of immense energy spiritual power, a brilliant light, a wave of love showers over me. I am in the presence of the Supreme soul, the Supreme father, the Unlimited, the purest, most immaculate soul of all. The Supreme is the ocean of all these treasures, *bliss, knowledge, peace, love, happiness, purity, power*. Going deeper into this peace I feel so still and light. I begin to explore this soft aura of peace. I am filling with feelings of warmth, love and comfort from God the Supreme whose gentle waves of golden, tender love, pass over me and soothe my mind. I become so still and quiet, *peaceful, powerful* Om Shanti.... Om Shanti..... Om Shanti



Sankalpa

I am a divine soul. My every thought, word, and action is full of happiness for others. Today throughout the day whomsoever I will meet, I will give peace, love, and happiness to everyone. As I think like this, baby in the womb is getting empowered with peace, love, and happiness. He/She is coming in this world to give peace, love, and happiness to others. He/She is coming to change this world. Like Shree Krishna and Shree Radhe my baby will remain ever happy and empowered with all virtues/values. My body is perfect, healthy “As we think, so we become.” My blood pressure is normal, my sugar is normal. Every cell of my body is full of love and purity. Everything is perfect. The world is beautiful. I will do this meditation every day, due to which me and my baby will remain physically and mentally healthy. Every moment GOD is with me, as GOD is my companion, my day is going to be successful. My career is extremely successful. I am GOD’s angel. I am spreading vibrations of peace, love, and happiness, in entire Universe, due to which this World will again become Golden age/paradise.

Shantipath

असतो मा सद्रमय ।
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ॥
मृत्योर् मा अमृतं गमय ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Lord Almighty, please show us the light which travels us from falsehood to truth, from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge, from mortality to immortality.

Walking

Walking is safe all 9 months of pregnancy and one of the easier ways to start exercising. At least 30 minutes a day, preferably outdoors for the fresh air, sunlight, and natural surroundings.

- ✦ Time table for morning walk in pregnancy
- ✦ Benefits of walking
- ✦ Pregnancy safe walking tips.

Pregnancy Safe Walking Tips

- ✦ Drink about half glass of milk/half a piece of apple/dry fruit before you start your walk. Always remember to carry a water bottle along with you.

- ✦ Get your doctor’s approval before starting.
- ✦ When pregnant you have to be more careful.
- ✦ Look forward while walking, to avoid sudden falls.
- ✦ Walk at a comfortable pace that is not too fast.
- ✦ Slow down if you are not able to walk with your growing belly.
- ✦ If in case you feel hot, breathless or tired, take a break.
- ✦ Do not walk in extremely humid or hot conditions.

Benefits of Walking during Pregnancy

- ✦ Retrospective data suggest that exercise may prevent gestational diabetes, reduce the risk of developing pre-eclampsia, and prevent excessive weight gain during pregnancy.
- ✦ Gaining weight at a steady rate can lower your chances of having—
 - Hemorrhoids
 - Varicose veins
 - Stretch marks
 - Backache
 - Fatigue
 - Indigestion
 - Shortness of breath during pregnancy.
- ✦ A review of the evidence suggests that, in most cases, exercise is safe for both mother and fetus during pregnancy and women should therefore be encouraged to initiate or continue exercise to derive the health benefits associated with such activities. Overall the body of literature in this field thus far is provocative, and when taken as a whole, suggests that exercise during pregnancy may be associated with a reduced risk of cesarean delivery.

BENEFITS OF EXERCISE IN PREGNANCY

- ✦ Pregnancy usually leaves women feeling tired; exercise gives you more energy to make through the day.
- ✦ Exercise allows you to sleep better.
- ✦ Improves your mood, lessens mood swings, improves yourself image, and gives you some sense of control.
- ✦ Prepares you for childbirth. Studies show shorter labor, fewer medical interventions, and less exhaustion during labor.
- ✦ Easier to lose weight after baby is born.

IMPORTANT POINT TO REMEMBER

Women with miscarriages or abortions in the past or those who have conditions like “placenta previa” should do exercises only according to their doctor’s advice. Routine sonography during the third month is useful.

■ BENEFITS OF YOGA IN PREGNANCY

- ✦ It minimizes common pregnancy symptoms like morning sickness and constipation.
- ✦ Effective for reducing pregnancy-related back and leg pains.
- ✦ Strengthen abdominal organs and muscles.
- ✦ Better sleep, prevents excessive weight gain, and have more energy overall.
- ✦ Improves balance, increases flexibility, and better blood circulation.
- ✦ It increases secretion of endorphin (happy hormone) that keeps mother energetic and positive so decreases erratic mood swings.
- ✦ Reduces cortisol levels so rate of prematurity also decreases.

■ CONCLUSION

So in Adbhut Matrutva programme we want to emphasize about the role of different asanas to prepare mother for process of delivery and to have intelligent baby, a peaceful mind by pranayama and meditation. Always remember you are having a pure soul in your womb and God gave you an opportunity to create it in better way. We as a doctor have major role in all this process, we know that subconscious mind of baby is always alert in womb, so we can teach a fetus more easily and can make a whole generation intelligent and Sanskarwan. It is time for action so try to teach everyone about the methods and spread the knowledge.

OM SHANTI