

# Anatomy Worksheet

## Lymphatic System

**What is the Lymphatic system?** The lymphatic system consists of lymph nodes, lymphatic vessels, and the spleen, among other things, that are responsible for regulating immunity and circulation in the body. This system is responsible for filtering out viruses, bacteria and toxins/activates the immune response.

**How Does Meditation Aid this System?** Because meditation allows the body to relax, this has an immense effect on the lymphatic system. Meditation really allows this system to function properly and improves immunity.

**How Does forward fold aid this system?** Because the heart is above the head in a position like this, it activates the lymphatic system by allowing fluids to drain, it enhances circulation and filtration and essentially cleanses the body.

**The Takeaway:** Basically the lymphatic system is the bodyguard to our immune system. It may be a small aspect in a bigger picture, but it is what activates our immune response and gets rid of what should not be in our body.

**How does Asana aid it?** Asana, especially forward fold, helps to activate this system by encouraging a healing state, through yoga we allow pretty much all systems of the body to function better and as we move and work, it encourages the lymphatic system to flush out the unhealthy toxins that we build up in our system.

### Anatomy of Asana:

**In what ways does yoga change the muscular structure to improve health?** It creates so much length in the back side of the body and engages the back, shoulders, core and thighs. This all will help not only the lymphatic system function better but other systems within the body as well

**How does it help to enhance connective tissues?** Forward fold lengthens so much of the back side of the body it also helps lubricate and strengthen the connective tissues from the soles of the feet, to the hips, space between vertebrae and shoulders.

**How does yoga go so deep it affects the skeletal structure and how so?** It really allows the body to surrender the spine to where we began (curled up in a fetal position in the womb). As our focus comes to lengthening the muscles in the legs, it allows strength and alignment in the hips, spine and neck with can alleviate tension or pain in those areas

**Go deeper! How does it penetrate on a cellular level?** Forward folds, like most asanas, have a lot of engagement with the body but can be extremely calming and relaxing. A good grounding pose, forward fold allows the body to relax, practice patience and humility all while gaining the physiological benefits that come with bringing the body into a restful state.

**Primary Movers:** back of legs, glutes, latissimus dorsi, and erector spinae

**Impact of asana vs meditation on this system?:** in this case, forward fold may have a slightly larger impact on the lymphatic system than meditation. Although both allow the body to relax, with forward fold, because the head is below the heart and the heart is below the hips, this really activates more of the lymphatic fluids/toxins to be flushed and cleanse the body more so than meditation would do on a physiological level.

**Create a Class:** Back to basics

**Posture 1:** Mountain Pose

**Cues:** Inhale mountain pose, ground down through your feet, hip width distance apart, Raise your arms high to the sky

**Qualities:** Tilt your tailbone slightly to align your hip points, press down through your shoulders to elongate the neck and engage your knee caps to activate your thighs

**Modification:** Option to leave hands by side or at heart center

**Posture 2:** Forward Fold

**Cues:** Exhale forward fold, hinge at the hips. Allow your upper body to melt down on top of your thighs, brush your fingertips on your mat, let your head hang heavy

**Qualities:** Keep your shoulders in your sockets to maintain the length in your neck.

**Modification:** Option to have a bend in your knees

**Posture 3:** Halfway lift

**Cues:** inhale halfway lift, rise halfway, rest your palms on your shins or thighs above the knee cap, isometrically pull the crown of your head and tailbone in opposite directions, ground down through your feet

**Qualities:** Draw your belly in towards your spine to activate your core, use that strength to support your body and protect your lower back

**Modification:** Option to keep a soft bend in your knees

**Posture 4:** Easy twist R/L

**Cues:** (exhale forward fold) Inhale easy twist, plant your R/L hand down and lift the other and gaze up

**Qualities:** Dip your upper hip point down to keep your hips neutral, engage your side obliques to shine your chest open

**Modification:** Option to bend your knees, Option to rest a block under your palm

**Theme a meditation:** (Intention at standing at attention) Connect with your breath and set an intention for yourself. If one does not come right away, I invite you to hold on to the idea of bringing things back to basics. We often rush through our daily tasks and become overwhelmed with everything that needs to be accomplished throughout our day. As you move forward through your practice, remind yourself it is the little things that get you through to the bigger picture. Perhaps it is something as simple as your

breath, or resting your palms on the earth, embrace these small gestures as they work for you towards something bigger.