

Anatomy Worksheet

Respiratory System

What is the respiratory system? The respiratory system is what controls the breathing. Our body inhales oxygen and exhales CO₂. It is responsible for this exchange within the bloodstream

How Does pranayama Aid this System? Pranayama is mindful breathing so by focusing on the breath and controlling our “life force” it actively engages this system to help calm the mind and the body.

How Does Mountain Pose Aid the respiratory system? This is a relatively neutral pose which allows for space to breathe effectively to help improve and deepen the body’s breath consequently calming the body and mind.

The Takeaway: The respiratory system is really important to our overall health. Pranayama (or controlled/mindful breathing) allows for bigger, deeper breath, this consequently will improve circulation, cardiac function and overall balance in the mind body and spirit.

How does Asana aid it? Asana, particularly mountain pose, aides this system by allowing our body to be in a relatively neutral, yet engaging posture, that allows the mind to center in on the breath.

Anatomy of Asana:

In what ways does yoga change the muscular structure to improve health?

Mountain pose is a neutral pose which will engage the glutes, legs, shoulders and core,

How does it help to enhance connective tissues? It broadens and lengthens muscles, massages the internal organs during engagement as well as helps joints stay active and healthy.

How does yoga go so deep it affects the skeletal structure and how so?It is a relatively neutral position, close to our anatomical neutral, although a relaxing posture it still engages most of the body, helping the skeletal system with neutral/good posture

Go deeper! How does it penetrate on a cellular level?It is a neutral position so it allows the mind and body to relax into a healing state which can help the body function better physically but also reduce stress so that we may function better emotionally and mentally as well.

Primary Movers: hamstrings, glutes, quads, trapezius, deltoids, triceps, core, hips and erector spinae

Consider impact on system by asana vs pranayama: Neutral asana poses like this will help to calm this system (however more engaged/advanced poses will increase how quickly we are breathing, but overall asana can really help to improve respiratory

function) Pranayama has a significant impact on this system since is a mindful act to engage it.

Create a Class: Stay Present

Posture 1: mountain pose

Cues: Inhale, breathe here, bring your feet hip width distance apart, allow your palms to face forward at your side, activate your knee caps to engage your thighs

Qualities: Core is engaged, press your shoulders down and away from your ears elongate your neck.

Modification: (neutral position, not necessary, however can bring hands to heart center)

Posture 2: Chair pose

Cues: Inhale chair pose, sit back and down into your hips, feet hip width distance apart, Raise your arms and stack your wrists above your elbows and your elbows above your shoulders

Qualities: press your shoulders down and away from your ears to elongate your spine, hug your navel to your spine to activate your core, isometrically pull your legs together to activate your inner thighs

Modification: Option to lessen the bend in your knees, option to bring your hands to heart center

Posture 3: “Chairplane”

Cues: Exhale chairplane, sit your chair a little lower, and swing your arms to the back part of your mat, palms facing down, gaze is down

Qualities: Stretch the crown of your head and your tailbone away from one another to elongate the spine, core is active

Modification: Option to tilt forward and bring hands to heart center

Posture 4: One legged Mountain Pose R/L

Cues: Inhale swing your arms up to the sky, raise your torso and your R/L foot, ground down into the opposite foot, bring the hip point of your raised leg down to align your hips

Qualities: Core is active, engage your glutes to help find stability and feel present

Modification: Option to bring hands to heart center to help your balance

Theme a meditation: (Beginning of class) Intention: As you connect with your breath and every moment we come into a neutral pose for your body, allow yourself and your body to mindfully make its way back to the present moment. So often our minds can wander from what we have done to what we need to do, but as you move forward in each moment, movement and breath allow yourself to stay here on your mat. Give yourself permission to forget everything else and stay present here in his moment with nothing but your body mind and spirit.