



### **Ardha Sage Marichi Twist - Half Marichyasana**

#### **Step 1**

Sit in Dandanasana (Staff Pose), then bend your right knee and put the foot on the floor, with the heel as close to the right sitting bone as possible. Keep the left leg strong and rotated slightly inward; ground the head of the thigh bone into the floor. Press the back of the left heel and the base of the big toe away from the pelvis. Also press the inner right foot actively into the floor, but soften the inner right groin to receive the pubis as you twist. Grounding the straight-leg thigh and bent-knee foot will help you lengthen your spine, which is always the first prerequisite of a successful twist.

#### **Step 2**

With an exhalation, rotate your torso to the right and wrap your left arm around the right thigh. Hold the outer thigh with your left hand, then pull the thigh up as you release the right hip toward the floor. Press your right fingertips onto the floor just behind your pelvis to lift the torso slightly up and forward.

#### **Step 3**

Remember to keep your straight leg and bent-knee foot grounded. Sink the inner right groin deeper into the pelvis, then lengthen your front belly up out of the groin along the inner right thigh. Continue lengthening the spine with each inhalation, and twist a little more with each exhalation. Hug the thigh to your belly, then lean back against your shoulder blades into an upper-back backbend. Gently turn your head to the right to complete the twist in your cervical spine.

#### Step 4

Stay in the pose for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Then release with an exhalation, reverse the legs and twist to the left for an equal length of time.

#### **Contra indications and Cautions**

Serious back or spine injury: Perform this pose only with the supervision of an experienced teacher.

Also avoid this pose if you have:

High or low blood pressure

Migraine

Diarrhea

Headache

Insomnia

#### **Modifications and Props**

Sometimes it's difficult to get the torso to move into an upright position in this pose, which makes the twist more difficult. Set up the pose with your back about a foot away from a wall. Then after you've twisted, press the free hand against the wall and push your torso up and forward.

#### **Deepen the Pose**

The full version of this pose is appropriate only for experienced students. Perform step 1. Exhale and twist the torso to the right, and press your right hand on the floor just behind your pelvis. Swing the back of the left shoulder to the outside of the right knee, keeping the left side of the torso snug against the inside of the right thigh. Reach the left arm forward, toward the right foot; then with an exhalation, sweep the arm around the leg and notch the right shin in the crook of the left elbow. Bring the back of the left hand to the outside of the left hip. Finally with another exhalation, complete the twist by swinging your right arm around the back and clasp the right wrist in your left hand (or have a strap handy to use if the two hands don't reach). Stay for an equal length of time on both sides, from 30 seconds to 1 minute.

#### **Therapeutic Applications**

Constipation

Digestive problems

Asthma

Fatigue

Lower backache

Sciatica

Menstrual discomfort

## **Preparatory Poses**

Baddha Konasana

Bharadvajasana

Gomukhasana

Janu Sirsasana

Supta Baddha Konasana

Supta Padangusthasana

Upavistha Konasana

Virasana

## **Follow-up Poses**

Ardha Matsyendrasana

Baddha Konasana

Padmasana

Upavistha Konasana

## **Beginner's Tip**

It's often difficult for beginners to sit upright after bending the knee as described in step 1. The pelvis tends to sink backward, which rounds the back and could cause back pain. To offset this problem and keep the pelvis in a neutral position, sit on a thickly folded blanket or bolster.

## **Benefits**

Massages abdominal organs, including the liver and kidneys

Stretches the shoulders

Stimulates the brain

Relieves mild backache and hip pain

Strengthens and stretches the spine

## **Variations**

In this pose the head is usually rotated in the same direction as the torso. But it's also possible to rotate the head counter to the torso. So, for example, when you rotate the torso to the right (as described above), you would rotate your head to the left and gaze out over your left big toe.

References - Yoga Journal Asanas