



Santhika Retreat Center

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Six Tibetans

"Feel good, be good, and do good." - Yogi Bhajan

The Five Tibetan Rites is a system of exercises reported to be more than 2,500 years old which were first publicized by Peter Kelder in a 1939 publication titled The Eye of Revelation. The Rites are said to be a form of Tibetan yoga similar to the yoga series that originated in India.

The 5 Tibetan Rites, also known as the "Fountain of Youth," are a series of five (sometimes six) exercises meant to be repeated 21 times.

They are thought to increase mobility and flexibility and help the body stay nimble as we age. Increased energy and feelings of calmness, mental clarity, greater spinal flexibility, better sleep, weight loss, healthier digestion, and improved libido have also been associated with the practice.

In addition to these benefits, research has also emerged suggesting that the flexibility of our spine predicts the flexibility of our arteries. Therefore, a yoga practice centered on spine flexibility, like the Tibetans, may help keep our arteries in a youthful state.



1. Stand straight, arms spread apart. Fingers together, palms open and facing down. Without changing the position of your hands, make a full turn clockwise (i.e., to the right). Repeat the turn twenty-one times without interruption.
When you finish the rotation, stand straight with your feet together and your hands on your hips. Take a deep, full breath through your nose. Exhale through your mouth; fold your lips in an "O" shape. Repeat inhalation and exhalation twice before moving on to Tibetan Exercise 2.

You may feel dizzy the first time you do this exercise. Be careful not to overdo it. This exercise strengthens the vestibular apparatus, the balance mechanism found in the inner ear. With regular exercise, the dizziness will stop and will not occur even at high rotation speeds; the movement will become light and smooth. This is the same spinning practiced by the dervishes, the Sufi mystics, who spin at great speed for a long period. They are known as "rotating dervishes".



2. Lie on your back on a mat or rug. Legs fully extended, ankles touching each other. The arms are extended along the body, palms are on the floor. Inhale through your nose, lift your legs a little more than ninety degrees, and lift your head, touching your chin to your chest. This is all done in one smooth motion. The toes are pointing up, the lower back should not come off the floor.
Exhale through your nose or mouth, returning your legs and head to the starting position - completely relax on the floor. Repeat the exercise twenty-one times without interruption, inhaling while lifting the legs and head and exhaling while lowering.
When finished, stand with your feet together and your hands on your hips. Take two deep breaths in and out, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, lips folded in an "O" shape.



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3. Kneel down with your toes touching the floor. Knees are about 4 inches apart (10-11 cm). The palms are on the back of the thighs, just below the buttocks. The back is straight, the chin is pressed to the chest. Inhale through your nose, arching back from your lower back. Throw your head back as far as you can without causing yourself any inconvenience. Your arms will support you as you lean back. Then exhale through your nose or mouth, returning to the starting position. Repeat the full movement twenty-one times at an even, rhythmic pace.
When finished, stand with your feet together and your hands on your hips. Take two deep breaths in and out, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, lips folded in an "O" shape.

4. Sit up straight with your legs extended in front of you. The palms are flat on the ground near the thighs. The position of the hands is very important, the palms should be directed exactly along the hips. The chin touches the chest.
Inhaling through your nose, raise your hips, bending your knees and standing on your feet flat, tilt your head back completely. You will find yourself in a position where your torso is parallel to the ground and your arms and legs are perpendicular. Exhale through your nose or mouth, returning to the starting position. Repeat the exercise twenty-one times in an even, constant rhythm. Make sure that the soles of your feet do not slip. The feet should remain in the same position until the end of the exercise. The arms should also not bend, the movement is carried out at the expense of the shoulders.
When finished, stand with your feet together and your hands on your hips. Take two deep breaths in and out, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, lips folded in an "O" shape.



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5. Starting position - support on the palms of the hands and the pads of the toes. Arms and legs about 2 feet (60-70 cm) wide. The head is raised and thrown back. Without bending your arms and legs, inhale through your nose, while lifting your buttocks and touching your chin to your chest, your body is a regular triangle. Exhale through your nose or mouth, lowering yourself to the starting position. Your body should only touch the ground with your palms and the pads of your toes throughout the exercise, and your arms and legs should not bend. Repeat the exercise 21 times at a constant pace.

When finished, stand with your feet together and your hands on your hips. Take two deep breaths in and out, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, lips folded in an "O" shape.

After completing all five exercises, lie on the floor and relax for a few minutes. Breathe easily and calmly. Watch for new sensations in your body.

6. Stand straight with hands on hips and feet about four (10-11 cm) inches wide. In this position, take a full, deep, long breath through your nose. Then exhale through your mouth with your lips together in an "O" shape. Exhaling, bend forward with your hands on your knees.

In this inclined position, push out the remaining air from yourself, so that the lower abdomen is drawn in. Holding your breath on exhalation and drawing in your stomach, rise to the starting position, place your hands on your hips. Don't inhale for a few more seconds. Then take a light, free, long breath and relax. The maximum number of repetitions of this exercise is three. When finished, stand up straight with your hands on your hips. Take two full, deep breaths in and out, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, folding your arms in an "O" shape.