

# Focus of the Month

## Setu Bandhasana

Pronounced (SET-too BAHN-dahs-anna)



## **Setu Bandhasana**

Pronounced: SET-too BAHN-dahs-anna

“Bridge Pose”

setu = bridge • bandha = lock • asana = pose

“The formation or construction of a bridge; in this position the body is arched and supported on the shoulders, soles and heels. The arch is supported by the hands and the waist” –B.K.S Iyengar

### **BENEFITS**

Setu Bandhasana gives the spine a backward movement and removes the strain on the neck. A healthy and flexible spine indicates a healthy nervous system. If the nerves are healthy the person is calm and centered in body and mind. This position may alleviate lower back pain from sedentary lifestyles such as prolonged sitting. It stimulates abdominal organs, lungs, thyroid, and improves digestion. Seta Bandhasana when practiced regularly can reduce anxiety, fatigue, insomnia and depression. Metaphorically, Setu bandhasana or bridge pose offers the practitioner a bridge into a state of being that is fundamentally more supported and connected to life.

### **STEP BY STEP**

1. Lie supine on the floor on a mat or blanket. Bend your knees and set your feet on the floor, heels as close to the sitting bones as possible.
2. Exhale and, pressing your inner feet and arms actively into the floor, push your tailbone upward toward the pubis, firming (but not hardening) the buttocks, and lift the buttocks off the floor. Keep your thighs and inner feet parallel. Extend through the arms to help you stay on the tops of your shoulders. Keep the neck relaxed.
3. Lift your buttocks until the thighs are about parallel to the floor. Keep your knees directly over the heels, but push them forward, away from the hips, and lengthen the tailbone toward the backs of the knees. Lift the pubis toward the navel.
4. Lift your chin slightly away from the sternum and, firming the shoulder blades against your back, press the top of the sternum toward the chin. Firm the outer arms, broaden the shoulder blades, and try to lift the space between them at the base of the neck (where it's resting on the blanket) up into the torso.
5. Stay in the pose anywhere from 30 seconds to 1 minute. Release with an exhalation, rolling the spine slowly down onto the floor.

### **VARIATION**

For the variation with one leg in the air maintain the position of Setu Bandhasana. Exhale and lift the right leg up to a perpendicular position. Inhale, bring the right leg to the floor, exhale, lift the left leg perpendicular to the floor, inhale take the left leg back down.