

The Navel Point

IN THE ANCIENT SHASTRAS IT STATES THAT, "all yoga starts at the Navel Point." There is an old Indian story which illustrates this point well. Once, a young student asked his teacher how far he must travel to find enlightenment and the true path of the Self. The teacher spread his fingers wide and said, "You must travel the distance from the thumb to the tip of the little finger. If you place the spread hand on your stomach with the little finger at the Navel Point, then the thumb stretches to the heart center. This is the mystical path consciousness must ascend."

In the discipline of the martial arts, the entire concept of balance and force depends on developing the awareness of the Navel Point as a center around which the body moves. In order to truly understand the nature of meditation and consciousness, a clear conception of the energy and function of the navel center is necessary. The Navel Point is not just a "point." It is a center of energy transformation in the body.

According to the science of Kundalini Yoga, the mental and physical levels of consciousness are totally interrelated and co-regulating. There are areas in the physical body that connect with the chakras in the electromagnetic body. The chakras transform different frequencies of energy, and this transformation results in different behaviors and levels of consciousness. There are eight major chakra areas: rectum, sex organs, navel center, heart center, throat, brow point, the anterior fontanel, and the aura, or magnetic field. The first center that must be stimulated in order to raise the energy of consciousness is the navel center. The navel center is described in the Upanishads as follows:

"In the center of the stomach, the navel center reposes in the chakra known as Manipura. Between the navel and the last bone of the spinal column is the Navel Point, shaped like a bird's egg. This encloses within itself the starting point of 72,000 nerves, of which 72 are vital and of these 72 there are ten that are the most important. In order to have proper control over these nerves, one has to take special pains."

The Navel Point does not correspond with the umbilicus, navel, or belly button, although it is related to it. The center itself is etheric, a few inches down and in front of, the lower spine. It has a very important function since thousands of channels carrying the life force of the body converge through this point and can have their different currents, ratios, and intensities of flow initiated and adjusted there. By observing whether or not the Navel Point is centered in its optimal location, and the intensity of the energy coming from it, we can self-diagnose and correct many maladies that would not easily be dealt with by other therapeutic approaches.

TESTING THE NAVEL POINT

There is a simple method for testing the Navel Point. It is based on a physical correlate to the Navel Point—the position, strength, and rhythm of the abdominal heart or navel pulse. The exercises, diets, manipulations, and daily habits that create a constant strength at the Navel Point are the "special pains" mentioned in the Upanishads.

To locate and feel the navel pulse, on an empty or almost empty stomach do the following:

1) Lie on the back. Completely tense and relax the entire body two or three times. This allows the abdominal muscles to totally relax and stimulates the navel pulse for easy location.



2) Do Stretch Pose for two to three minutes. This exercise is even better for relaxation and bringing out the navel pulse.

3) Next, make the tips of your fingers into a little circle. Press the tips down on the belly button toward the spine. Press firmly but with gentleness. You will be able to feel one point with your fingertips that beats strongly. If this beat is exactly in the center of the navel, then we say the Navel Point is centered and in place. If it is displaced, many hard-to-diagnose maladies can exist in the person's body.



UNDERSTANDING NAVEL POINT MALADIES

Learning to adjust the Navel Point is an elementary skill used by kundalini yogis and is one of the pillars of ayurvedic medicine diagnosis. Two things are measured:

1) Students must feel the intensity and rhythm of the beat of the navel with the fingertips.

2) The location of the beat must be measured from the belly button.

To check Navel Point alignment by physical measurement, there is a slightly different procedure for a male and female.

For a male: Take a string and measure the distance from one nipple to the belly button. Mark the length of the string. Move the end of the string to the next nipple and see if the length from the nipple to the umbilicus is the same. If the lengths are not the same, then the Navel Point needs adjustment.

For a female: You will need to enlist the help of a friend to measure the distance from your toes to your belly button. To reduce any error from hip rotation, put your heels together and press your toes out away from your heels equally on each side.

In a male, the navel generally displaces to the left, in a female, to the right. If the navel beat is found above the belly button, improper digestion, constipation, acidity, diseases of the heart, and general irritation in behavior will be the result. If displaced downwards, the result is loose motion, dyspepsia, colic pain, and bad dreams. If displaced sideways, acute pain results. These pains are located in various nerves of the body and are difficult to remove with drugs. In the female, displacement often leads to such problems as leukorrhea and menstrual irregularity.

THE CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT

There can be many causes of displacement:

▶ Overeating or eating improper foods. For example, eating too much meat and sugar are common causes.

▶ A fall, or uneven distribution of body weight due to jerky motions. For instance, too much weight or a sudden strong jerk on the left foot displaces the navel to the right. A jerk on the right foot displaces the navel to the left.

▶ Birth control pills, drugs, and tranquilizers can all cause displacement.

▶ Carrying heavy things during menstruation.

SETTING THE NAVEL POINT

Certain yoga exercises and diet can be used to correct the Navel Point displacement.

▶ Stretch Pose done every day will help maintain the Navel Point in alignment.

▶ The Navel Adjustment Kriya (*see Sets chapter*)—which includes Stretch Pose, Bow Pose, Wheel Pose, and Fish Pose—can be done in combination with other *nabhi* (navel) *kryias*, but only if the additional exercises are done prior to this series.

▶ Eating a yogic diet can be very effective in correcting Navel Point displacement.

▶ If the problem is severe, there are many health practitioners who have been trained by Yogi Bhajan to correct Navel Point displacement.

Yogi Bhajan on the Navel Point

There is a very powerful psychic power under the Navel Point. It sits there like a cobra snake and when it wakes up, it travels through the six centers of the body and awakens them with its touch. When it touches the Seventh Center, the person knows all. When it intermingles with the aura, it delightfully enlightens the arcline and makes everything work out for the person.

